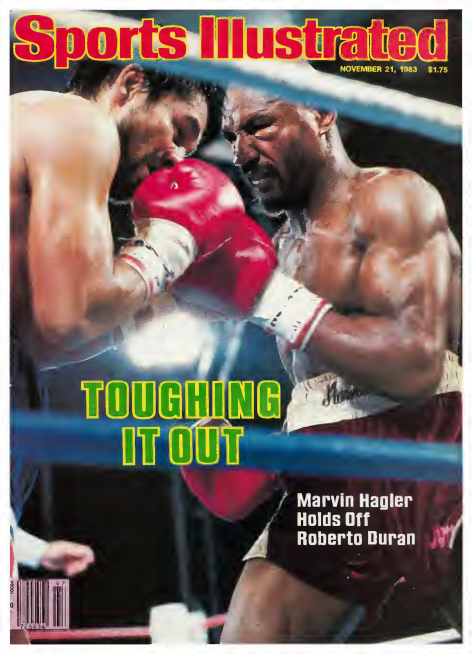


Sports Illustrated

A close-up action shot from a boxing match between Marvin Hagler and Roberto Duran. Hagler, on the right, is wearing white trunks with 'Hagler' written on them and red boxing gloves. He is in a defensive stance, blocking a punch from Duran. Duran, on the left, is wearing dark trunks and is leaning forward, throwing a punch. The background is dark and out of focus, showing the ropes of the boxing ring.

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LEADING OFF



78



On the sea, superboats like Popeyes made a splash in the world.
On land, U.S. speed skaters like Scott Gray were working strenuously.
In the air, NBA Guard Norm Nixon was in full flight for a new team.

CONTENTS

NOV. 21, 1983 Volume 58, No. 22

Cover photograph by Mervyn Miller

24 Back Where They Belong

Most of the faces are new, but the Pittsburgh Steelers are in the same familiar place: first in the AFC Central Division

by Paul Zimmerman

30 Marvelous Wasn't Marvelous

Marvelous Mervin Hagler held on to his middleweight title, but he tarnished his image in defeating Roberto Duran

by William Nack

40 Trampling Through the Hedges

Visitors rarely win at Georgia's Sanford Stadium, but Auburn did exactly that to plant itself firmly in the Sugar Bowl

by Jack McCallum

46 No Golden Harvest

Triumphant at Lake Placid, the U.S. speed skating team is divided and is heading for disappointment at Sarajevo

by E.M. Swift

54 No Glitz, but Maybe Glory

After six seasons with the Lakers, Norm Nixon has traded cruising the Strip in L.A. for driving the lane in San Diego

by Bruce Newman

65 Has the Pac Quacked Up?

A year ago the high-riding Pac-10 had something to shout about, but this season all is quiet on the Western front

by Douglas S. Looney

90 'Any of Us Might Have Done It'

So said one of Linebacker Todd Becker's Pitt teammates of the night Becker dropped out a third-story dorm window

by Rick Telander

DEPARTMENTS

19 Scorecard

71 Horse Racing

74 Hockey

78 Boating

80 College Football

89 TV/Radio

119 For the Record

120 19th Hole

Credits on page 112

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Sideline

by FRANZ LIOT

WHEN CONFINED TO HIS ROOM, THIS KID PLAYED A SOLITARY GAME OF SOCKBALL.

Probably we all made up games when we were kids. Maybe we did it when we caught the mumps, or perhaps when we uttered our first curse word and Mom sent us to bed after a soap dinner.

My game was sockball, a solitary pleasure. One day I grabbed a bunch of socks out of the bottom drawer of my bureau and tightly rolled three or four into a resilient ball. I picked out wool ones for their bounce. I'd shoot at my "basket" from zones marked by the foot of the bed, the edge of the bureau, the corner of the wastepaper basket. A goal was worth anywhere from one to three points, depending on what zone I'd shot from. My make-believe players took their names from words that intrigued me: Vortex, Nimbus, Thanatos. I kept their lifeline stats and knew what each of them looked like, who their wives were and how many children they had. The centers were tall, the guards quick, the forwards deadly.

I'd leap around, "dribbling"—actually sort of juggling—the sockball from hand to hand, and toss it toward the goal, which was the triangular opening formed at the top of the door by the open door and a wall of my room. The sockball would thunk against the wall and sink to the floor. "What's going on up there, a hockey game?" my sister Sandy once asked. She was partly right.

Sockball had its origins in hoops and rutz, a rugby-like indoor sport devised by Jeff Kahn, a fifth-grade classmate. Kahn had one of those dinky little plastic footballs you used to get in dime stores. He played rutz in his living room until his mother installed a white shag rug and banished everyone with feet.

Like rutz, sockball was suitable for confined spaces—bedrooms, toiletbooths, death-row cells. I became the first sockball All-America. But the game had one liability: socks. After a few years they'd get scuzzy and full of holes. My career ended one winter when Sandy came into my room looking for extra footwear. She unraveled my sockball and went outside to build a snowman—with my game in her boots.

END



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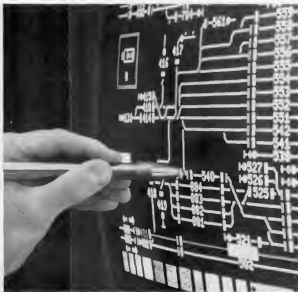
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BOOKTALK

by JEREMIAH TAX

MEMORY DOESN'T SERVE LORD KILLANIN ALL THAT WELL IN HIS OLYMPIC MEMOIRS

It's been said often that anyone is entitled to write his memoirs, because no one is obliged to read them. Taken facetiously or otherwise, the principle is valid, but unfortunately so in the case of the recently published memoirs of Lord Killanin, head of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the years 1972-80 and a member of the IOC from Ireland since 1952: *My Olympic Years* (William Morrow & Co., Inc., \$15.95).

A lot of people in sport should be obliged to read the book, especially Americans. It is an unparalleled opportunity to see ourselves as others see us. In this instance the observer is a witty, urbane writer—he was a journalist with London newspapers for many years before joining the IOC—as well as a dominant figure on the international sports scene. This is particularly true if one does not agree with Lord Killanin's Olympic views—and I do not agree with most of them.

While the book is packed with interesting details about the Games since their reestablishment in 1896, the persistent argument—the polemic—that runs through it concerns the mix of sports and politics; much more than half the book is devoted exclusively to that.

Killanin does not waste time calling for the separation of sports and politics; he is well aware that this is both futile and irrelevant. In his eight-year term as head of the IOC, he was deluged with political problems, including the aftermath of the massacre of Israelis at Munich, the disputes about recognizing two Germanys and two Chinas, apartheid in international sport and the U.S. boycott of the '80 Moscow Games. Politics and the Olympics have been inseparable since the first founding meetings of the IOC in the 1890s, which the French threatened to boycott if Germans attended.

Killanin himself says, "No one, I believe, needs less convincing than myself that politics are 'in' sport and have always been. Everything in our lives is governed by political decision." And then he comes to the crux of the issue: "What we

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in sport and the Olympic Movement need is the interest and support of politicians, not their interference." What constitutes interference rather than support, what is a laudable "use" of sport for political ends and what is insupportable—these are questions both honest and dishonest men disagree on, as well as democratic and totalitarian states. They are not easy questions. In 1976 at the Montreal Games, Killam and the IOC resented and deplored the boycott by African countries caused by New Zealand's refusal to cut sporting ties with South Africa over its policy of apartheid. Just a few years later, however, the IOC backed the Russians in warning France it would be thrown out of the Moscow Games if it allowed a French tour by a South African rugby team. Hard political questions affect the IOC's most important function: determining in what country the Games will be held every four years.

There are also, I believe, far simpler questions. To this day, in these memoirs, Killam defends the Games of 1936 and attacks the considerable worldwide efforts to boycott them on the grounds that spectators in Berlin witnessed the evils of Nazism and returned to their home countries better able to express their repugnance of it—in false and famous argument as can be imagined. He is rewriting history. No less a personage than his own Olympic mentor, Avery Brundage, returned from those Games to give a speech in Madison Square Garden in which he said: "We can learn much from Germany. . . . No country since ancient Greece has displayed a more truly national interest in the Olympic spirit than you find in Germany today."

The fact is that from the day the Nazis took over, staging the '36 Games became an instrument of government policy, apparently a tolerable "use" of sports and athletes. For foreign visitors, Berlin was scrubbed clean of official murder, official thuggery and other brutalities of official policy—Nazi "efficiency" going so far as to rehang, temporarily, the paintings by Jewish artists that had been removed from the National Gallery. The view of Germany that visitors carried back to their home countries was a public relations triumph of sweetness, light and strength through sports.

What inspires much of this book—which was first published in England—is Killam's fury at the boycott of the Moscow Games by the U.S. and 61 other na-

continued



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BOOKTALK continued

tions because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. That action ruined Killam's hope of making those Games the crowning achievement of his Olympic career as he left the IOC presidency. (He puts quotes around the word "invasion" as if he believes that the thousands of Russian troops still there are on holiday.) The 229-page book is barely into its fifth paragraph when Lord Killam begins criticizing the positions on the boycott taken by President Jimmy Carter, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain, Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser of New Zealand and other heads of state. Killam's criticism of the U.S. boycott in the British edition of the book is considerably softened by him in the American version, for obvious political reasons.

After Killam has his cake by castigating both Houses of Parliament for their behavior in support of the boycott, he proceeds coyly to eat it, too, affirming that, of course, "as an Irishman" he declines to get involved "in British domestic policies."

The Russians, it should be noted, have often enough threatened to boycott the Olympics for political reasons. At the Montreal Games, as Killam relates, one of their male swimmers suddenly disappeared and they became convinced that he had been seduced into a defection by the U.S. As they prepared their denunciations and started to pack up and go home, the swimmer reappeared—having defected for only a brief spell into the arms of a female capitalist.

Killam approvingly quotes Avery Brundage's description of the Olympics as "the greatest social force of our time." Whatever its ranking, it is a major force indeed. The men and the handful of women who control that power—the IOC—are, in Killam's accurate words, "a self-electing, self-perpetuating body . . . a club to which membership is invited . . . and, in fact, for more than half the world's countries there are no members." This should disturb no one, he believes, "since it is not understood that the members are not representing their country at the IOC, but the IOC in their country or territory from which they come."

To the man capable of this disingenuous disclaimer, it perhaps came as no surprise that Brundage, the man who was IOC chief executive for 20 years, answerable only to himself, could tell us all that we have much to learn from Adolf Hitler.

END

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Footloose

by FRANZ LIDZ

AT THIS UNIQUE MUSEUM, ONE CAN SEE A DUICKER, A BONGO AND A CHEVROTAINE

The man who shoots a Cape buffalo faces the same dilemma as the man who shoots his mother-in-law: What do you do with the body?

Paul Asper, 51, says you should stuff the buffalo. But he hedges on the disposition of the dispatched in-law.

Asper is curator of the National Taxidermists Association Hall of Fame and Museum, a tiny shrine tucked away in Hanceville, Pa. He made a fortune distributing snowmobile and motorcycle parts in the early 1970s and sold out at the time of the energy crisis. Now he mostly indulges his lust for hunting. But big-game hunters like Asper who want to preserve their trophies have a problem. An eight-foot Yukon moose is not exactly a loving cup for the manel.

So Asper decided to store the treasures from his globe-girdling hunts in a huge, empty warehouse he owns. (The warehouse is very near the site where Asper bagged his first trophy—a gray squirrel—at the age of 12.) He called the exhibition portion of the warehouse the Fin Fur & Feather Museum and donated another part of it for the taxidermists' Hall of Fame. The reason that the organization chose a Pennsylvania woodlot as the place to honor the masters of the art is simple: It didn't have a better offer. But it turns out that 15,000 people a year are willing to trek to the Black Forest of Central Pennsylvania to look at dead animals.

Asper claims he's a conservationist, and maybe he is. He went to conservation school and spent five years as a district game protector. Like many hunters, Asper claims he kills animals to conserve them. Hunters, fishermen and trappers, he says, are "the only consistent supporters of wildlife programs."

The museum is a monument to Asper's conception of wildlife support. The trophy cases are full of plane-ticket stubs, expired visas and snapshots of

Asper kneeling next to carcasses. The world's largest collection of life-size mounted sheep and stuffed examples of all 27 species of North American big game recognized by the Safari Club International can be seen there. Asper bagged the 27th, a Wyoming moose, last month with a .270 Ruger at 200 yards. Many of his trophies are displayed in vaguely realistic replicas of their natural habitat.

A lot of the animals are best known as the triple-word scores in Scrabble or as seven across in the Sunday crossword puzzle. There's a sitatunga, a duiker, a bongo, a chevrotain, a dik-dik, a hartebeest and a pumman. The wapiit Asper killed in Outer Mongolia is the biggest on record with the Safari Club, as are his Gobi argali, the tahr and fallow deer. Alas, his Sudan roan has fallen to No. 2.

The Hall of Fame, in a small adjoining room, is a modest affair. Its prize relic is a kob popped off by Teddy Roosevelt. A bronze plaque at the entrance commemorates the 29 taxidermist inductees. Most of them are now dead, though none are on permanent exhibit. **END**

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FIRMNESS AND RESTRAINT

After Larry O'Brien surprised everybody last week by announcing his resignation as NBA commissioner, effective Feb. 1, the encomiums to him poured in from practically every league city. But among more casual NBA observers there was also some foot shuffling and throat clearing. Oh, yeah, sure, Larry O'Brien. The reaction was almost as understated as O'Brien's eight-season stewardship had at times appeared to be. It seemed so long ago that O'Brien presided over the ABA-NBA merger and the Oscar Robertson antitrust settlement. And what about the NBA's recent successes, such as the collective-bargaining agreement that averted a strike last season and its get-tough drug policy? Weren't those widely perceived as being coups by the players' union, not by management?

But give O'Brien credit. Public perceptions aside, the landmark collective-bargaining agreement, which was sensibly designed to check spiraling salaries, and the new drug-control policy were, in fact, worked out in a unique spirit of co-operation between NBA Players Association General Counsel Larry Flesher and O'Brien. O'Brien preferred a non-confrontational approach to league problems, but he wasn't afraid to act swiftly and forcefully when necessary. He served notice of this when, in 1975, just days after assuming the job, he cracked down on the Knicks, who had signed ABA refugee George McGinnis, even though the 76ers held his draft rights. O'Brien immediately voided the New York contract, restored McGinnis' rights to Philly and docked the Knicks a future No. 1 pick for poaching. When the Lakers' Kermit Washington slugged Houston's Rudy Tomjanovich during a game in 1977, inflicting serious injuries, O'Brien imposed a fine and suspension on Washington that cost him \$60,000. By such means O'Brien adroitly forestalled and defused controversy in a sport that, contested by the biggest of men in the closest of quarters, was ripe for it.

O'Brien's critics point to the league's lingering competitive imbalance and financial woes. But there's little a commissioner alone can do other than try to hold expansion in check and void ludicrous trades, both areas in which O'Brien was

vigilant. As one NBA watcher put it, "The commissioner has no real power over which yo-yos will own an NBA team. It's up to the other yo-yos." But thanks largely to O'Brien's firm yet restrained leadership (all signs indicate that the "yo-yos" will name David J. Stern, the league's executive vice-president to succeed him), the NBA stands as an island of sensibility in the sea of pro sports. Now, when people think of drugs, they are just as likely to think of pro football as basketball; when they think of player violence—the rough play that has occurred during the current NBA referee strike notwithstanding—they think of hockey. And when they think of spend-thrift free agency, they increasingly think of baseball.

SIGN OF RESPECT

Each week during the football season, the Student Supply Store, which is located near the Iowa State campus in Ames, puts a big sign in its front window saying SPLATTER OKLAHOMA or BEAT KANSAS and so on, depending on the name of the Cyclones' upcoming foe. Before Iowa State was shelved 72-29 two weeks ago by the nation's top-ranked team, the sign in the window was worded a bit differently. It said: MAINTAIN DIGNITY AGAINST NEBRASKA.

ACCOMMODATING RAY

One day last spring, NBC-TV college basketball commentator Al McGuire called up Rich Hussey, the network's director of sports programming, and said, "My God, we have to have Ray's last game! How can we not have Ray's last game?" McGuire, the former Marquette coach, was referring to Ray Meyer, who plans to retire at the end of the 1983-84 season after 42 years as the DePaul Blue Demons' coach. Hussey quickly agreed that Meyer's regular-season finale should be telecast, but it was decided that the team's scheduled season-ender at home against Dayton on March 10 wouldn't have quite the same pizzazz as, say, a DePaul vs. Marquette windup. So Hussey tried to get the DePaul-Marquette game that had been scheduled for Feb. 18 in Milwaukee moved to Chicago and into

the March 10 slot originally set aside for DePaul-Dayton.

The switch wasn't quite as simple as it seemed. Marquette said it would cooperate as long as it wound up with the same number of home games on its schedule. That meant the Warriors needed a replacement game in Milwaukee if the game with DePaul was going to move to DePaul's home arena. The only team on Marquette's schedule that would consider giving up a home game was Northwestern, but that school needed to give its fans something in return. The Wild-



cats' athletic director, Doug Single, wanted to start a series with DePaul, so after getting a guarantee for a game with the Blue Demons for the 1984-85 season, Northwestern agreed to play Marquette in Milwaukee. The only date open in Milwaukee was Dec. 10. Northwestern, however, already had a game with George Mason for Dec. 10. Northwestern had an open date on Jan. 14, but George Mason had a game against Monmouth scheduled for that day. George Mason had an open date on Jan. 7, but Monmouth had a game with Rider. Monmouth had an open date on Jan. 11, but Rider had a game against American University. Fortunately, Rider and American both had openings on Jan. 12. They ar-

continued

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ranged to play on the 12th. Rider and Monmouth agreed to meet on Jan. 11. Monmouth and George Mason on Jan. 7. Northwestern and George Mason on Jan. 14 and Northwestern and Marquette on Dec. 10. Stetson had been scheduled to play Marquette on March 10, but that game was moved to Feb. 18, the day originally set for Marquette-DePaul. And what about Dayton? The Flyers consented to move their game against DePaul to Feb. 18 on condition that the game be regionally televised and that Dayton find an opponent for the open date it now had on March 10. Old Dominion agreed to fill that bill.

"It got to where I was offering Al McGuire for end-of-the-season banquets," Hussey said of the machinations

and inducements it took to make all the switches. The network also agreed to pick up some air-travel expenses for George Mason and hotel bills for Monmouth and Rider. Was all this worth the effort? "Everyone was willing to go the extra mile for Ray," Hussey said.

LETTING GEORGE DO IT

In case you haven't been reading the newspapers lately, Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn and Yankee owner George Steinbrenner are fusing again, this time over Kuhn's plans to hold a disciplinary hearing on criticism that Steinbrenner leveled at American League President Lee MacPhail following the latter's ruling against the Yankees in last

season's Pine Tar Case. Steinbrenner has gone to court to block the hearing. Citing several cases in which Kuhn has ruled against him in the past, Steinbrenner claimed the commissioner was biased against him. All of which may make you wonder, in case you have been reading the papers, what *The Washington Post* was referring to in a story last week headlined: **BOWIE LETS GEORGE DO IT IN OVERTIME**. What would Bowie possibly let George do these days—in overtime or otherwise?

The story referred to a goal that Bowie (Md.) High School freshman Chris George scored in the second overtime to beat Eleanor Roosevelt High in the state AA regional soccer finals.

YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN, GERRY

During a recent visit to Rome, 15 Catholic bishops from the U.S. were invited to dinner at the Vatican with Pope John Paul II. One of them, Bishop William E. McManus of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend (Ind.), later reported in the diocesan newspaper, *The Harmonizer*, that the Pope served his visitors baked sea bass and that they in turn informed the Holy Father about developments in the U.S. church. McManus also wrote, "One bishop, not I, told the Pope about Notre Dame's football team, another bishop requested papal prayers for Coach Faust, a fine Catholic gentleman." The Pope smiled as if to indicate that his attention was centered on much more complicated contests.

THEY SAID IT

- Clay Bittner, Memphis State defensive back, on whether he attributed a key pass interception he made in a 28-25 win over Tulane to an ability to read offenses: "I wasn't trying to read anything. I'm just a freshman."
- John Brodie, TV football commentator and ex-49er quarterback, recalling his fling on the PGA tour two decades ago: "I was the leading money spender."
- Paul Owens, the Phillies' malapropahappy manager, to a cab driver with a loud radio: "Hey, cabbie, could you turn that thing down a hundred decibels?"
- Jack Kelly Jr., U.S. Olympic Committee vice-president, on present-day amateurism: "Let's be honest. A proper definition of an amateur today is one who accepts cash, not checks."

END

HOOTING DOWN THE 'HOO

The University of Virginia has had a variety of sports mascots over the years. In the 1930s the mascot was a beloved mongrel dog named Beta, who is buried in hallowed ground in the university cemetery alongside a later mascot, Seal, who achieved immortality by irrigating a Penn cheerleader's megaphone during a big upset of the Quakers in 1949. In recent years a student dressed as a Cavalier, the school's official nickname, has served as the mascot.

But Virginia students and Old Grads have drawn the line with the 'Hoo, a furry, orange-costumed character (see photo) that replaced the Cavalier as mascot at the start of this football season. The branchchild of Sports Promotion Director Todd Turner, who described it as "an entertainment device," the 'Hoo—the nickname is short for Wahoo, a name sometimes used to refer to Virginia athletes—debuted at Virginia's home opener against Duke on Sept. 3 and promptly 1) was showered with ice cubes from detractors in the stands and 2) suffered the forced removal of its tongue by pre-eyed fraternity boys. Because of fear of further violence, the 'Hoo (with a student inside) appeared only briefly on the sidelines during the Navy game on Sept. 10. As objections to the 'Hoo mounted, Athletic Director Dick Schultz invited the school's student council to come up with an alternative. The council settled on a redesigned Cavalier. He's sched-

uled to swing into action during the basketball season, and next football season he'll have a dog as a sidekick.

And what of the 'Hoo? The ill-fated creature, one of the few negative aspects of an unusually successful season (6-4, with one game left) that included a 17-14 upset of North Carolina on Saturday, is now only an unhappy memory. An editorial in *The Cavalier Daily* described it as "a video game reject who tried out for Ms. Pac-Man and didn't make the cut." A letter to the paper was rougher still. It called the 'Hoo "a bastard child born out of the incestuous relationship between the athletic department and the cash register."



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Sports Illustrated

NOVEMBER 21, 1983



Back Where They Belong

Many faces are new, but the Pittsburgh Steelers are in the same old place: first in the AFC Central by PAUL ZIMMERMAN



Harris, that renowned blocking back who has also run for 11,725 NFL yards, clears out Colt Safety Jeff Delaney (above) to spring Abercrombie (34) on an 11-yard touchdown sweep.

CONTINUED

The Pittsburgh Steelers are doing it with mirrors. They're also doing it with a pair of no-named receivers, Calvin Sweeney and Gregg Garrity, and an offensive line that averages 6'2½"—the shortest line in the NFL—and features such household names as Rick Donnalley and Tunch Ilkin. They're doing it with Cliff Stoudt at quarterback and with a defense that has, oh, maybe four or five guys you've heard of and is a shifting force field employing as many as 19 different players on a single series.

Eleven games into the schedule it's clear that Chuck Noll is in the midst of his finest coaching job in 15 seasons in Pittsburgh. Last Friday, two days before the Steelers beat Baltimore 24-13 for their seventh straight win, someone asked Colts Coach Frank Kush if he realized that he and Noll were among the leading candidates for NFL Coach of the Year. It was a logical enough question, because Kush had been working miracles of his own, lifting last year's winless Colts to within one game of the AFC East lead. "Chuck can give one away, he's won so many," Kush said, meaning Coach of the Year awards.

Now wait just one minute, Frank. Hardly anybody wins Coach of the Year



Harris lifted Greg Bracelin off his feet as Stoudt (18) somehow got this pass off.

for four Super Bowl triumphs, which, of course, Noll—and no one else—has had. Tom Landry hasn't won Coach of the Year for keeping the Dallas Cowboys in the hunt for the last 18 years. Coach of the Year is an emotional award. The rags-to-riches guys make it, the fellows who take a dog and turn it into a playoff team. The elite are taken for granted, and Noll, very much a member of the elite, has never won the award for the entire NFL.

But the '83 Steelers are 9-2, tied with Dallas and the Washington Redskins for the best record in pro football, running away in the AFC Central, and nobody quite knows how Noll is doing it.

After Sunday's victory Noll

was asked, "What do you think of your Steelers now?" He made a face. The NFL history book is filled with the sad stories of November hotshots that faded down the stretch. "I think there are still five games left to play," he said.

"If you could capitalize this Pittsburgh team in a word, how would you do it?" someone else asked him.

"Adaptable," he said.

This is what the Steelers have had to adapt to:

Last April, Jim Smith, their long-ball receiving threat and the heir apparent to Lynn Swann, went to the Birmingham Stallions of the USFL, and starting Left Tackle Ray Pinney joined the Michigan Panthers. In March, Quarterback Terry Bradshaw had an operation to repair a torn muscle in his throwing arm. Bradshaw has yet to suit up this season. A few weeks ago his rehabilitation had progressed to the point that he was throwing for two hours a day, but then he strained a triceps and hasn't thrown since. If Bradshaw makes it back for the playoffs it would be a bonus, but no one's counting on it. Moving right along.

John Stallworth, a Pro Bowl wide re-



Forget Swann. Sweeney caught six passes, one for a touchdown.



ceiver, missed six games with a sore hamstring. The Steelers got him back for one game, and then last Thursday in practice he went down again with a sprained ankle. The offensive line hasn't looked the same from one week to the next. Center Mike Webster and Tackle Ted Petersen are the only starters who haven't been out of the lineup. Larry Brown, the Pro Bowl right tackle, has missed the last six games with a bad leg.

On Oct. 20 Pittsburgh was rocked by tragedy when 6'2", 293-pound rookie Defensive Tackle Gabriel Rivera, the Steelers No. 1 draft choice, was critically injured in an auto accident in North Hills. He's still in Allegheny General Hospital. Doctors fear permanent paralysis from the chest down.

Somehow, through all the adversity, the Steelers tightened the straps and drew everything together. Starting at quarterback after six years on the bench, Stoudt has had his ups and downs. He has heard his share of boos. No one will

forgive him for not being Bradshaw. Nonetheless, Stoudt has managed to keep his composure—and his sense of humor. "On Halloween I went out disguised as a quarterback," he said a couple of weeks ago. "No one recognized me."

In the season opener Denver had intercepted him three times. "What did you learn from your first start?" someone asked him.

"How to tackle," he said.

Another time Stoudt was asked to name his favorite charity.

"Defensive backs," he said.

While the Pittsburgh offense continues to have its shortcomings, the defense keeps making big plays. It went into the Colt game as the No. 1-ranked unit in the NFL, and, what's more, it had come up with seven touchdowns this year, a figure that Defensive Coach Woody Widenhofer calls "shocking." Before this season the most defensive TDs a Noll-coached team had scored was two.

It's a curious mix, this edition of the Steeler defense, led by 10-year veteran Jack Lambert, who's still playing middle linebacker at All-Pro level, and manned largely by ambitious youngsters such as Defensive End Keith Willis, a second-year free agent out of Northeastern, whose 13 sacks are a club record.

There was an oldtime flavor as the Steelers flew into Baltimore. For the first time in six years the Colts, at 6-4, had a

contending team. Fortified by an influx of some 20,000 fans from Pittsburgh, Memorial Stadium was sold out for the first time since December 1981. "We always know the Pittsburgh fans," said a doorman at the downtown Hilton. "Their luggage is Iron City beer."

On Saturday night, Colts' owner Bob Irsay was interviewed on local TV. "If someone said 'playoff' to you, what would you say?" he was asked.

"I'd respond in one word," said Irsay. "I hope so."

The Steelers arrived for practice in Memorial Stadium on Saturday under heavy, dark clouds. The field was under a tarp. Noll, his seven assistants and the 49 players rolled up the tarp, worked out for an hour and then rolled it back on again, fighting the blustery winds that swept the tarp up into huge, rolling waves—Banzai Pipeline with the surf up.

"You're not supposed to use the field," the stadium manager told Noll. "I'm protesting to the league office."

"See our legal department," Noll said.

The game figured to be a throwback, too, involving two teams geared to running the ball—the Colts were No. 1 in the NFL rushing department, the Steelers No. 3—and stopping enemy rushers. Both operate from a traditional two-back offense, with each back called upon to block; both shun frills and gimmicks and multiple sets and passes. Only one team

continued



By the way, Harris can still carry the mail, as he did 19 times for 65 yards Sunday.



Pagel, pressured by Steeler John Goodman (left), gave way to Hermann, who nearly gave away the football on this fumbled snap.

STEELERS *continued*

has thrown less than Pittsburgh this year, and that's Baltimore. "My pitch 'n' pray offense" is what Kush calls it when he has to put the ball in the air. "We know what they're going to do, they know what we're going to do," Noll said. "I don't expect many surprises."

The Steelers took the opening kickoff and drove 75 yards—all on the ground—for a touchdown. The drive was kept alive by a roughing-the-punter penalty—a surprise gift. The touchdown, an 11-yard sweep by Walter Abercrombie, was triggered by Franco Harris' block on a safety. That was a surprise, too, unless you've been watching Franco closely this year. In his 12th NFL season, Harris has emerged as an efficient and willing blocker. "Among running, pass receiving and blocking, I'd say I like blocking last," he says, "but I guess that after 12 years I'm better at it now."

The Colts got a field goal on their first possession—a 46-yard cannon shot by

their free-agent rookie, Raul Allegre, that would have been good from 60 yards. His next try, another 46-yarder in the first quarter, was blocked when Linebacker Mike Merrweather slid through a gap in

the Baltimore line and got a hand on the ball. "That's two special teams' mistakes worth 10 points," Kush would say later, "and you just can't get away with that against a team like Pittsburgh."



Lambert, in his 10th NFL season, shows that old All-Pro technique in clobbering Dickey

Midway in the second quarter the Steelers got a 42-yard Gary Anderson field goal and a 10-6 lead. Again, the drive was an infantry march—61 yards in 10 plays, with only eight of the yards coming on a pass. It looked suspiciously like old-style Pittsburgh football—set 'em up with the run, then knock 'em out with the pass. And sure enough, with two minutes left in the first half, Stoudt threw four completions, for 55 yards, to Sweeney, whose last reception of the sequence was a leaping seven-yard touchdown catch in the right corner of the end zone. Sweeney ended up with six receptions for the game, one fewer than his total for the 1981 and '82 seasons.

The Steelers had all the points they needed. Kirsch called on Mark Herrmann, the backup quarterback who hadn't played at all this year, to take over for Mike Pagel in the second half, but he was overmatched. Six second-half possessions produced just one touchdown, a five-yard plunge by Curtis Dickey set up by a 14-yard run by Randy McMillan and a 29-yard pass to Ray Butler. That cut the Steelers lead to 17-13. But in the fourth quarter the Steelers turned out the lights with a final TD. It was a neat bit of tomfoolery in which Stoudt scrambled to his left, drawing in linebackers Johnae Cooks and Barry Krauss, and then lobbed the ball to Tight End Bennie Cunningham for a two-yard score.

The game's most significant statistic was the 214 yards the Steelers gained on the ground, 65 by Harris, 42 by Stoudt, 27 by Abercrombie and 80 by Abercrombie's reliever, 5' 10", 210-pound Frank Pollard, who's having his best year in his four seasons with Pittsburgh. The pitched-up offensive line seems able to make Noll's trap-block attack go no matter who's playing, this was the Steelers' fourth 200-plus rushing day of the year. Steve Courson, a sawed-off, 6' 1", 270-pound guard who looks like he could trap-block a pickup truck, was back in the lineup Sunday after a five-week knee injury. The 31-year-old Webster, 10 pounds lighter, at 250, than last year and much quicker off the ball, is having his finest season in 10 with Pittsburgh. "He's playing the best center that's ever been played in the NFL," Noll says.

The Colts' blitzing gave the Steeler linemen some problems, but when the running game was clicking the ten lead-



McMillan stood Rick Woods and the other Steelers on their heads with 60 rushing yards.



Dickey went five yards for this score, but one TD was not enough to beat the Steelers.

ing the way were very pretty to watch. "All those years," says Art Rooney Jr., the director of Pittsburgh's scouting operation, "Noll used to tell the scouts, 'I don't want any dumbbells on the offensive line. Get me guys who can think on their feet—and move. I don't care how big they are.' Well, it's paying off. These guys are adaptable. Take a kid like Emil Bourea. We drafted him in the seventh

round last year, as a center, but so far he's filled in at every offensive line position—plus weakside tight end in short yardage situations. And he's only 6' 1'."

"A lot of teams won't draft an offensive lineman unless he stands 6' 6", Noll says. "We don't have a 6' 6" minimum. We're looking for guys who can play."

And are the Steelers ever finding them

END

Marvelous Was Something Less Than Marvelous

Marvelous Marvin Hagler retained the middleweight title but tarnished his image in beating Roberto Duran

by WILLIAM NACK

Toward the close of the 12th round last Thursday night, Marvelous Marvin Hagler and Roberto Duran fought at a savage pace. Duran scored with hard, straight right hands to Hagler's face, and just before the bell blood trickled from Hagler's swollen left eye, as Duran taunted Hagler by pointing to his chin and saying, "Hit me! Hit me!" Hagler, the undisputed middleweight champion, obliged with a hard right as he chased Duran into a corner.

The crowd of 14,600 in the stadium at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas was on its feet roaring long after the bell had sounded. But the 12th, which Duran won with such a flourish, was mere prelude to

continued

While Duran threw compass jabs in the 15th round, Hagler could still flat punch.







Although he wasn't able to rock Hagler, Duran chipped away with counter rights.



what would happen in the next round. Duran brought the multitude up again, and again, and then it was chanting, "Doooooran! Doooooran! Doooooran!" Spurred on by the crowd and driven by the force of his own furious will and considerable talent, Duran, the WBA junior middleweight champion, appeared to seize control of the fight.

Midway through the 13th, Hagler struck Duran with a mighty left to the face, but Duran countered to the body, jarred Hagler with a sharp right to the head, cracked him with another right and then a third, and followed with a left and a right. Now someone in the crowd was blowing a bugle, a clarion call, it seemed, for Duran. At the bell he landed a final right to Hagler's head, and Hagler smiled sarcastically as he went to his corner. It was Duran's round, and Hagler knew it.

Suddenly—and quite miraculously—there was a sense in the stadium that Duran, a 4-to-1 underdog who had been so roughed up in the sixth round it looked as if he'd never make it to the ninth, had not only survived but might yet prevail; that the former lightweight and welterweight champion of the world was about to make history by becoming the first man ever to win four world titles; and that Hagler's middleweight crown, which he'd won three years before and had successfully defended seven times, all by knockout, was in grave danger of being taken.

Hagler was simply Marvin now. It was Duran who had been marvelous. At the end of the 13th, Luis Spada, Duran's manager and strategist, told him, "You won the last two rounds, you win the fight. Throw punches. Make points. You have to win the last two rounds!"

Goody Petronelli, Hagler's trainer, told his man the same thing. Almost four years earlier at Caesars, Hagler had suffered his biggest ring disappointment, losing his first bid for the middleweight title when the judges, in a highly questionable decision, called his fight with then champion Vito Antuofermo a draw.

In his 16½ years as a pro, Duran never had to face a jab as menacing as Hagler's.



Petronelli kept busy, using an iron to reduce swelling around Hagler's eye before the eighth (above) and closing cuts before the 14th.

Now Petronelli feared a similar shift. "I want a strong 14th and 15th," he told Hagler. "You can't make this fight close. You've got to win these last two rounds."

At that point judge Guy Jutras of Canada had the fight even, at 124-124, while judge Yasaku Yoshida of Japan, whose indecision had been such that he'd called six rounds even, actually had Duran ahead 127-126, as did Ove Ovesen of Denmark, 125-124. If many at ringside would later be astonished at the judges' cards—Hagler had certainly landed more and harder punches to this juncture—it was unmistakable that Duran had craftily fought within reach of victory in the 12th and 13th rounds.

That this was so, after what Duran had been through during the preceding year, and particularly in the previous 51 minutes, gave an otherwise routine evening a sudden sense of moment. Only 363 days earlier, in the Orange Bowl in Miami, Duran had decimated someone named Jimmy Batten in what appeared to be the closing fight of his career. It was a dreadful performance for a man who had once been so consummate a fighter, and it looked as if he had lost the skills that had served to make him the fighter of the '70s.

But then, 2½ months later, Duran whipped Papino Cuevas, and on June 16 of this year he stunningly lifted the junior middleweight title from the inexperienced Davey Moore by stopping him in the eighth round. Despite the skeptics, who could not forget that Duran quit in the eighth round of his 1980 welterweight title rematch with Sugar Ray Leonard and who doubted that something of the

old Duran remained, promoter Bob Arum made the Hagler-Duran fight. Both fighters trained with fervor, and by the time they arrived in Las Vegas they were dead fit for the occasion of their lives. On the morning of the fight Duran weighed in at 156½, Hagler at a pound more.

"I'm in the same shape I was when I fought Leonard the first time," said Duran, referring to his WBC welterweight title victory in June of 1980. And

continued



he was additionally armed with a strategy, devised by Spada, that called for Duran to box—to move rather than attack—and induce Hagler to miss.

"How ready can you get?" Hagler asked three days before the fight. "I want to get it over with. After a while, all the talking gets to you. I go to sleep now listening to myself talk."

Talk they eventually did, though it took Hagler a while to learn the strange

knew at all times what he was doing was Duran. "People think I'm going to go crazy in there, like against Leonard," Duran said before the fight. "But, no." Though decidedly undersized and outgunned—Duran is an inch shorter than Hagler and has eight inches less reach—he arrived at the 14th round with a chance, on more than the judges' cards, of finessing Hagler's belt from him.

It was a strange fight, with small eddies

The first round was a sleepwalk. "I knew that Hagler was waiting for me to get inside to fight with him," Duran said afterward, "so he could get his punches in with force." Nothing doing, of course.

When Duran didn't attack in the second, Petronelli began to worry: "I thought, 'What's going on here?'"

Not that much, really, which was the source of Petronelli's concern, though the fighters did mix it up somewhat more than they had in the first round. Hagler caught Duran with a solid right jab, a punch Duran would feel throughout the fight, and he scored uppercuts to the body and head when they fought inside. But Duran was making himself a difficult target and finding the range with his straight right hand, the punch that eventually took him as far as he went.

"Duran was fighting the smarter, more composed fight," Ovesen would say. "He made Marvin miss and countered on his own. I made those two rounds for Duran, but not by much." The fight was going as Duran and Spada had planned it. "I fought him at half-distance," Duran said. "I was waiting for him to unload so I could score on him. Whichever hand he unloaded, I was ready to counter. He didn't confuse me with anything. I was beating him without mixing it up too much."

Petronelli's foreboding deepened. "Duran wanted and wanted and wanted for Marvin to lead," he said. "We had to change our tactics and go on the offensive, which isn't really Marvin's style." So at the end of the third, Petronelli told Hagler, "This ain't going too well. Put the pressure on him."

Through the uneventful fourth and fifth rounds, Hagler showed a harder jab but to little effect. "He'd slip and counter, slide back and wait for me," Hagler said. "When you're trying for a knockout, it's the hardest thing to get. That's what I was after, but you have to let them come. He wasn't there. Duran is too crafty to go after for a knockout. You leave yourself open, and he takes advantage of it."

Duran, meanwhile, was using every trick picked up in his 80 pro bouts (of which he had won 76) to keep out of harm's way: gliding left and right, then facing Hagler straight on, now giving him angles, then slipping and bobbing under punches, picking them off with his hands and arms, even turning his head to avert

continued



During his comeback late in the fight, Duran flexed his muscles and his mouthpiece.

new language Duran brought into the ring. And Hagler's discomfort with the relatively passive Duran showed in long, inexplicable lapses of his own originality and will, until he became aware that his title was truly at risk.

Aside from Referee Stanley Christodoulou—who did a superior job of preventing Duran's low blows from becoming a factor while letting the fighters fight—the only man in the ring who

and currents that made it difficult to score, but fascinating for what it revealed about the personalities of its leading men. Duran is an imaginative actor onstage, an original who creates ring drama by the mere feint of his head. Hagler is a score, without creative urgency or flair. He's a stalker, conservative and cautious, almost insecure, whose ring presence can be likened to that of a mechanic in a garage—speak softly and carry a big wrench.

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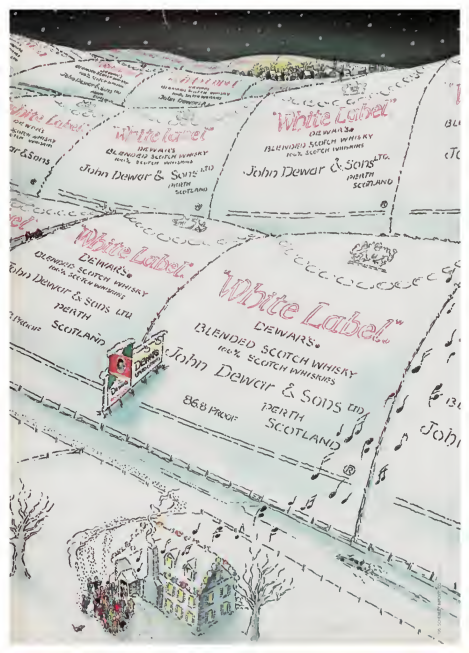
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Hagler's savage uppercuts. "They were strong," Duran said. "I turned my head to be careful of his right because it's his most dangerous hand. His left is dead. The hand he most relied on was his right."

Hagler had trouble with Duran's hand speed, and he often couldn't find Duran's head. "I wasn't getting my jab off the way I generally do," said Hagler, who was more effective when he switched from a lefty to a righty stance, which brought him two feet closer to Duran. "It seemed everybody was disappointed that I didn't knock him out. I felt that way myself. But he wasn't that vulnerable to a knockout. It was hard to hit him with a solid punch. I didn't catch him with a solid shot."

Oh, but he did, especially in the sixth, when he tagged Duran repeatedly and heavily with lefts and rights to the body and head and appeared to have him on the ropes. Duran needed his chin of stone to survive the sixth, but the fight was clearly Hagler's if he would only reach out and grasp it. And now Duran had another obstacle to contend with. In the fifth round he'd driven a hard right to Hagler's forehead, and thereafter he felt pain in his right hand every time he landed it. Hagler never knew this.

Duran soon came to feel that his major protection against all-out attack, his cocked right hand, was so enfeebled that it left him vulnerable. "I was a little scared because he was coming in straight up," Duran said. "I could reach him with any right, but actually I was scared to throw the right hand." To survive, if not to win, Duran kept throwing it anyway through the rest of the fight.

All of this might have been moot had Hagler seized his advantage. But he didn't. Though Duran hadn't hurt him—and apparently couldn't hurt him—Hagler fought from the seventh to the 10th rounds as if Duran were Larry Holmes.



Having lost, Duran didn't think the decision was so hot.

"He came to tear my head off," says Duran, "but when he saw that I could hit him hard, with strength, he got scared and became a coward. That's why he didn't take too many chances and mix it up with me. Everyone was saying he was a destroyer, but when he hit me, he didn't do anything to me. His punches absolute-

ly did me no damage. He got scared every time he threw a jab because I could get my right in under it. That's why he held off so much."

Why Hagler, whose general motto is "Destruct and destroy," came so close to self-destructing became a central question following the 11th round, when he danced and let a tiring Duran back into the fight. What was he worried about? "I'm not a fool either," Hagler would say, "going in to get hit. You don't barrel in there on a guy like Roberto Duran. Why take unnecessary punishment unless you have to? I'd been effective and was winning the fight, so it isn't like I had to go in there and take the punishment to bomb him out."

No matter. Hagler won the fight by heeding Petronelli's advice and battering an exhausted Duran for the last six minutes of the fight, finally shedding his caution when he had to and taking the fight to the challenger. Briefly, Hagler was marvelous again. "The better man won," Duran said, after two judges had given Hagler the victory by one point, the other by two.

Ironically, the loser came away with \$4 million and his reputation enhanced, while the winner stepped out of the ring with \$8 million and his image diminished. And all the possibilities seem to be Duran's, with a unification bout against WBC junior middleweight champion Thomas Hearns and another multi-million-dollar payday in the offing. Hagler, who ran his record to 58-2-2, is left to fight in the mediocre middleweight division, with his next defense against Juan Domingo Roldan, the Argentine who knocked an inept Frank Fletcher unconscious in a fight before the main event.

Hagler proved himself the best middleweight on the block, while Duran showed that he is a lighter for the ages and should again be the object of celebration.

END

...while Hagler got a real belt out of the judges' ruling.



It's a shame that this Auburn team came together in the Year of the Cornhusker, because the Tigers are tough and talented enough to win a national championship themselves. Well, perhaps next season. Auburn has a jazz dancer at cornerback, a whiz kid at linebacker and as many as six future pros on the defensive line. And Auburn runs a fine-tuned, old-fashioned triple-option wishbone with a quarterback who strums easy-listening songs on his guitar, a left halfback who plays the role of a big brother, though he's only 5' 7" and 171 pounds, and a talented right halfback with the potential to be the second-best runner ever to wear No. 34 in the Southeastern Conference.

The Tigers are also a team with a mission—they've dedicated the season to Fullback Greg Pratt, who collapsed and

tender their invitation until this weekend, but the white substance that the Tigers spread on the game ball Saturday was definitely not the drug of choice for today's athlete. Dye took the ball, grinned mischievously and licked off the sugar. Not too nutritious, but, oh, so delicious.

In New Orleans, Auburn most likely will face the winner of Saturday's Ohio State-Michigan game. Georgia, meanwhile, is still a good bet to play in the Cotton Bowl, probably against Texas. If the Bulldogs do meet the Longhorns, fans should bring plenty of NoDox because that one could end up 3-2. You've all heard "How 'bout them Dawgs?" Well, "How 'bout them dogs?" must be a reference to Georgia's sluggish offense.

Words of praise are nevertheless in order for Coach Vince Dooley and his Bull-

Visitors rarely win amid the flora at Georgia, but Auburn's Tigers did just that to plant themselves in the Sugar Bowl **by JACK McCALLUM**



They Trampled Through The Hedges

died on Aug. 20, after a preseason conditioning drill. They're a team with a proven winner in Coach Pat Dye, who mixes in some merriment with all his militarism. Most significant, they're a team with something even mighty Nebraska doesn't have: a tough schedule.

Last Saturday, Auburn stared into the deepest, darkest pit of that schedule and didn't blink. It beat Georgia 13-7 on the road, walking out of Sanford Stadium with a 9-1 record, at least a share of the SEC title, a Sugar Bowl bid and pieces of the storied Sanford hedge in their teeth. Sugar Bowl officials won't officially

dogs. "I still consider Georgia the Number Four team in the country," said Cornerback David King, the Tigers' gift to Auburn's Dance Theater. And when Nebraska, Texas or even Auburn falters next year of the year after, remember Georgia's consistency over the past few seasons. The Bulldogs are 40-2-1 in their last 43 regular-season games.

Befitting its tradition, Georgia is still fighting—or "hunkering down"—as the locals like to say—even as it became obvious that Saturday was Auburn's day. From the opening kickoff until Georgia got possession with 3:35 remaining, the

Tigers had outgained the Dawgs 359 yards to 94 and appeared to have one of the safest 13-0 leads imaginable. To that point Georgia Quarterback John Lastinger had completed only four of 12 passes for a measly 32 yards, had been booed by his own fans and had been replaced on occasion by sophomore backup Todd Williams. Lastinger has been a consistent winner the past two seasons more because of his equanimity than his physical talents.

Georgia's last-gasp, 80-yard TD drive cut the Tigers' lead to 13-7 with 2:11 showing on the clock. Never mind that



Five plays after Williams (93) recovered the fumble above, James (6) scored on a four-yard dash thanks to a block from Jackson.

the march also accounted for 48% of the Dawgs' total yardage for the game. When Bulldog Safety David Painter recovered the ensuing onside kick at the Georgia 46, the Dawgs were back in contention. But not for long. Georgia's final series lasted just four plays and netted minus six yards, thanks largely to Tiger Defensive End Quency Williams, who sacked Lastinger on first down, and to Linebacker Gregg Carr, who tackled freshman Fred Lane for a three-yard loss on third down. Carr, who finished with a team-high eight stops, is a civil engineering major with a 3.72 grade-point average and a cinch to be named Academic

continued





Handing off to Agee—or faking to him—is Campbell's first option in Auburn's wishbone.



Campbell compares making lengthy left-handed pitchouts to shooting a basketball.



All-America. How 'bout them Tigers?

Auburn's return to respectability was all but assured the day that Dye, an assistant under Bear Bryant at Alabama from 1965 to '73, arrived on campus in January 1981 with an impressive 54-23-1 record after six years as head coach at East Carolina and one at Wyoming. Dye's methods contrast sharply with the easygoing regime of his predecessor, Doug Barfield, who was 29-25-1 from 1976 to '80 and never beat Alabama. Dye, now 23-10 at Auburn, defeated the Tide in his second try. If he can beat Bama again at Birmingham on Dec. 3, the Tigers will have their first undisputed SEC title since 1957, when they also won the national championship.

"I'll never forget Coach Dye's first meeting," says Auburn Tackle Pat Arrington. "He walked in and said flat out, 'I'm going to the Sugar Bowl, and anybody who doesn't want to go with me can leave.' By the time that first spring practice was over, about 30 guys had left. That's how tough it was. Believe me, I thought about quitting every night."

"I'd been a linebacker under Coach Barfield," says Dowe Aughtman, the noseguard in the Tigers' 5-2 defense. "Coach Dye took one look at me and said, 'My linebackers are 215 and run a 4.8 40.' Well, I weighed about 240 at the time and couldn't run less than a five. I thought my career was over until, luckily, I found a new position."

Aughtman is now part of what may be the best college defensive line. He and fellow seniors Doug Smith, Donnie Humphrey and Williams, along with juniors Ben Thomas and John Dailey, all have pro potential. The only consolation for the opposition is that all six can't play at once. At 6' 6", 275 pounds, Smith is the most fearsome. In the first quarter he stripped Lastinger of the ball, and Williams recovered at the Georgia 24. Five plays later Lionel (Little Train) James circled right end for a four-yard touchdown to put the Tigers ahead 7-0. James's running mate, sophomore Bo Jackson, who would rush for 115 yards on 18 carries, had set up the score on the previous play by mowing over three would-be tacklers in the backfield and continuing around left end for eight yards.

continued

Smith (99) anchors what could well be the finest defensive front in college football.



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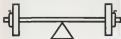
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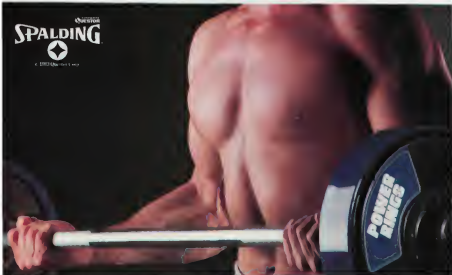
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The 6'1", 229-pound Jackson has matured a lot since last season, when he was moody, inconsistent—and almost gone. One evening in November, Jackson left his dormitory at 6 p.m., walked to the Greyhound station in Auburn and looked longingly at the buses that pulled out for his hometown, Bessemer, Ala. Finally, at 2 a.m., a bus station employee asked him to leave.

"I was fed up with everything, the practices, the pressure, the coaches nagging at you," he says. "I just couldn't accept the way it was different from high school, where the coaches had to put up with my selfishness. I honestly don't know whether I really wanted to get on a bus. But I got thrown out of the bus station, and the next morning I went and told my coach [Running Back Coach Bud Casey] the whole story." Casey was sympathetic. He then instructed Jackson to do 25 "stadiums," which are sprints up the 69-row bleachers at Jordan-Hare Stadium, as punishment for violating curfew. Jackson got the message that this was college, not high school.

Jackson's adjustment has been made easier by the counsel of James. "He's my little big brother," says Jackson. "I look up to him." James's blocking has always been an inspiration to Jackson, not to mention an important reason for Jackson's glowing 6.9-yard 1983 rushing average. In return, Jackson has worked hard on his own blocking to help bolster James's stats, and his efforts have paid off. James, who ran for 84 yards on 13 carries against Georgia, is averaging 6.3 yards per carry this season. On James's TD, Jackson got the key block, cutting down Bulldog Cornerback Darryl Jones. After the score Jackson ran over and gently lifted James off the ground, a small ritual that they perform after either one gets a touchdown.

In the second quarter Jackson put the Tigers in position for their next score, a 21-yard field goal by Al Del Greco, with a 20-yard gallop around left end that showed the wishbone at its best. Auburn runs a true triple option, which allows Quarterback Randy Campbell to read the defense before deciding whether to leave the ball in the belly of Fullback Tonnale Apee, the first option on most plays, or to take it out and either run himself or toss back to James or Jackson. On this play he took the ball out and made a long, left-



Del Greco (above) kicked two field goals, and Herman Aroehe got Georgia's only TD.

handed pitchout to Jackson. "It took me a long while to learn how to do that because my right arm is a lot stronger than my left," says Campbell. "In this offense we have to make some long pitches. It's not a flip with the thumb down like in the veer or other offenses. This is like shooting in basketball."

On another option play later in the second quarter, two Georgia defenders converged on Jackson and ignored Campbell. So he squatted through untouched for 21 yards to the Bulldog 41. Five plays later Del Greco kicked a 41-yard field goal that gave the Tigers their 13-0 halftime lead.

As it so often has, Georgia's superb defense toughened in the second half, holding Auburn scoreless and allowing it only 123 yards. In fact, the best player on the field last Saturday was not Jackson, James or Smith, but Bulldog Linebacker Knox Culpepper, who was in on 21 tackles. And the best player *not* on the field—most of the time anyway—was Terry

Hoage, the Dawgs' All-America rover-back. Hoage had missed the previous week's 10-9 win over Florida and didn't practice for the Georgia-Auburn game because of a badly sprained right ankle. Before the opening kickoff he was in his customary position, windmilling the crowd into a frenzy, but the pain in his ankle was too much even for the gutsy Hoage, and he played only a couple of series.

Auburn now has a three-week break before facing 'Bama. The Tigers deserve a rest. They have survived one of the country's toughest schedules—six opponents were in SI's Top 20 when Auburn played them—with only one breakdown, a 20-7 loss to Texas on Sept. 17. Since then Auburn has won eight in a row. But nothing is tougher than beating Georgia in Athens: where the fans deeply believe that their Dawgs can't be beaten "between the hedges" that surround the field. Jackson was quietly chewing on a piece of that plant life after the game when someone asked him what it tasted like.

"Tastes like dog meat," Jackson said with a smile.

END



There Will Be No Golden Harvest



It was a dreary scene. Ever since the U.S. speed skating team—rather, the 31 members of the team who had chosen to follow Coach Dianne Holum—had arrived in Trondheim, Norway on Oct. 17, it had rained or snowed every day for 11 days. It was raining now—a cold autumn downpour that chilled the skaters to the marrow as they did laps on the 400-meter outdoor rink. Their blades made long

Triumphant at Lake Placid, the U.S. speed skating team is divided and heading for disappointment in '84

by E.M. SWIFT

scythe-like slashes in the film of rainwater covering the ice, slashes that disappeared an instant after the skaters had passed. The skaters were squinting in the rain, listening to the slickered Holum shout out their splits. "Thirty-eight point six," she called to one. "Thirty-nine,

four," Mike Crowe, Holum's assistant, yelled to another. One of the skaters fell on a turn and got up cursing, drenched. The rain continued to come down through the two-hour workout. Afterward, cold and tired, the skaters faced the half-mile walk back to the Hotel Transiten in the wet dark.

There was no change in the weather during the night, and the next day, when the speed skaters took their morning jog, they ran in a steady drizzle. They were at

Troubled Trondheim: Gray skies, steady rain, poor ice and high prices met the 31 members of the team who followed Holum to Norway.



the halfway point of their 22-day European training stint, the faraway location of which was made necessary when officials of the Olympic authority in Lake Placid, N.Y. failed in their efforts to open the Olympic oval for the U.S. team on the agreed-upon date, Oct. 16. As each of the 22 days passed, it was meticulously crossed off the workout calendar posted on Holm's hotel room door. To make matters worse, the trip was costing each of these 31 Olympic hopefuls some \$1,600. The mood? "I hate the food, hate the weather; we're stuck in a hotel in the middle of nowhere, it's expensive and the ice sucks," summed up one skater. "What's to complain about?"

That same day 15 other members of the U.S. speed skating team were training in Inzell, West Germany, sharing the 400-meter oval there with skaters from several other countries. The sky was bright blue, the foliage was red, and col-



Heiden's medals symbolized a golden era.

orful flowers grew from the balconies of the picturesque Bavarian houses in the village. Some of the U.S. skaters had been in Inzell since Sept. 29, and it had been a good fall—fine weather and pro-

ductive workouts. Most of the skaters were staying in guest rooms above a local travel agent's garage, living on approximately \$15 a day, feeding themselves on such staples as fried sausages and spaghetti. Twice a day the Americans got out on the ice, but as they were reeling off as many as 700 400-meter laps per week, there was no one calling out their splits, studying their technique, recording them on videotape. Said Heinz Mayerbüchler, the caretaker of the rink at Inzell, "We have 13 teams training here this fall: the Canadians, French, Scots, Italians, Dutch, Austrians, Swedes, Norwegians, Romanians, South Koreans, Poles, Finns and, of course, Americans. The U.S. group is the first I've seen come here without a coach."

Three-and-a-half months before the Olympics, virtually all the top male speed skaters in America were going it alone. The mood? Defiant and resentful. "In

continued

Inviting Inzell: Sunshine, brilliant foliage and fast ice brightened the visit of dissident U.S. skaters, though they missed having a coach.



SPEED SKATERS *continued*

Norway are all the skaters who were dissatisfied that they did not make the world team last January," said Nick Thometz, 20, the best sprinter on the U.S. team and one of those training in Inzell. "So they hollered for a new coach and a new program. They were a majority, but it's odd that the best people had no say."

"We've got a funny situation in Amer-

ica," added 1976 Olympic 1,000-meter gold medalist Peter Mueller, a former U.S. coach who's now trying an on-ice comeback. "Our coach, Bob Corby, is back in Madison [Wis.], and we're here in Inzell by ourselves. There's a lot of friction on the U.S. team."

That's putting it mildly. Less than four years after its glorious showing in Lake Placid, the American speed skating program has fallen on its keister. The ruling body in the sport, the United States International Speedskating Association (USISA), has been struck by internal dissension over its coaching selections, and hamstrung by a lack of money, the result of incompetent fund raising. Depending on whom you ask, young talent either isn't there—or it's there and not being developed. One thing everyone agrees on: There are no up-and-coming Eric Heiden's on the U.S. team; he, remember, won an unprecedented five individual gold medals in the 1980 Olympics. Nor, probably, is there a Leah Poulos-Mueller. Peter's wife, who in 1980 won two silvers. There may not even be a Beth Heiden, who took home a bronze from Lake Placid. Indeed, the U.S. skaters even stand a chance of coming up empty at the Games in Sarajevo. That hasn't happened to American speed skaters since 1956. Says Holum, a four-time Olympic medalist herself, "Nobody knows about us; nobody cares. I thought, after Eric, the sport would start to grow more in the U.S. But there's more to it, I guess, than having a champion."

American speed skating has long been something of a mystery. Though relatively few U.S. athletes participate in it—250 by latest count—speed skating has provided the U.S. with more Winter Olympic medals, 38, than any other sport. (Mind you, with five men's events ranging from 500 meters to 10,000 meters, and four women's events from 500 to 3,000, there are more medals at stake in speed skating than in other winter sports.) In fact, the first medal awarded in the Winter Olympics went to a U.S. speed skater, Charles Jewtraw, who won the 500 in the 1924 Games in Chamonix, France. That seemed to set a trend.

U.S. speed skating, drawing its stars al-

continued

Piant trailed Thometz at Inzell while he worked up an appetite for a dish served by Mueller to Piant (left) and Mark Mitchell.



Mueller, checking his skate blade, feels that USISA officials have dulled the skaters' edge.



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most entirely from the Midwest, thrived thereafter without fanfare, without financial support and without facilities. Until the Lake Placid oval opened in 1978, the only 400-meter speed skating rink in the U.S. was in the Milwaukee suburb of West Allis. Holland, by contrast, has 10 such rinks. Future gold medalists like Holm and Anne Henning grew up skating on flooded football fields in suburban towns, which made U.S. speed skaters seem the very embodiment of the Olympic ideal, showing once every four years that hard work, sacrifice and talent could overcome just about anything.

Which is exactly what will have to happen if any of the U.S. skaters is to come home from Sarajevo with a medal. Before overcoming the powerful Soviets, East Germans, Dutch, Swedes and Norwegians, American speed skaters must first contend with some rather fierce in-fighting and backbiting within their own organization. "These kids don't excel because of USISA but in spite of it," says Corby, a former U.S. co-coach, who, along with Mueller, quit that post during last winter's World Sprint Championships. "I tell you, dealing with those guys is like dealing with a bunch of Cub Scouts. Except the Cub Scouts would be a lot more organized. What they're doing to the sport is criminal."

That's one opinion, not without support. The countering one, as expressed by a couple of "those guys"—USISA President George Howie and board member Gene Sandvig—is that the coaching team of Corby and Mueller was not successful in developing the current crop of young U.S. skaters, particularly the girls; that the majority of team members were disenfranchised; and that Corby and Mueller had resigned of their own volition. Says Howie, "For the last year Corby and Mueller and Sandvig couldn't get along. When you're working for somebody, you can bend a little and try to work things out or you can quit."

Corby, 33, was hired in June 1980 to replace Holm, who resigned after five years as the U.S. co-coach, shortly before her daughter, Kirstin, was born. The top U.S. skaters at Lake Placid—the Heidens and the Muellers—had all moved on to other things, so the group Corby was working with was young and inexperienced. In the fall of '80 the team decided to train in the U.S. rather than in Europe and, because of refrigeration malfunctions, didn't skate regularly on the West

Allis rink until Thanksgiving weekend. "That's like telling John McEnroe that he can only use his racket four months a year," says Corby. "The Russians skate every month except July and August. We could never catch up. So that was our last autumn in the U.S."

In 1981 Mueller, 29, who had spent the 1980-81 season guiding the Austrian national team, was hired to co-coach the U.S. team with Corby. The two of them had similar philosophies, worked closely and for the next two years sparred with increasing regularity with the USISA board over policy decisions. Among the issues debated were where to go in Europe—and when—for training and competition, and how to allocate funds for training camps and expenses. Another bone of contention was the size of the national team. Corby and Mueller wanted to cut back the number of skaters from the unwieldy 55 that qualify now. However, the two most powerful members of the board, Sandvig, who is program and development committee chairman, and Secretary William Cushman, opposed the change. Complicating this dispute was the fact that both Sandvig and Cushman were in conflict-of-interest situations, since Sandvig's 22-year-old daughter, Susan, and Cushman's son, Tom, 19, were both on the national team. "Their kids were always borderline, always around place 25 or 28," says Mueller. "The fathers start making rules to benefit these two kids so they could go to Europe and to training camp. It's a big farce. We have a handful of skaters who are really good and then there is a big drop-off. Since the association has no money to begin with, we just cut everything really thin."

In defense of the two board members, it should be pointed out that both Holm and Corby consider Tom Cushman to be one of the most promising young skaters on the team. Sandvig denies the charges of nepotism. "We think we should take care of the masses rather than a select group," he says. "Look what happened in 1980. All the skaters that did win medals

quit the sport. You've got to be developing young skaters so you'll have someone coming up the line."

Ideally, the solution is to have an elite traveling team of perhaps 20 members, and a separate development team with its own coach. That's the system used in other leading speed skating countries. That of course requires money, and USISA is even shorter on money than it is on harmony. It lost its only corporate sponsor after the 1980 Olympics and now operates on an annual budget of some



Holm left the team in 1980 just before having Kirstin.

\$200,000, 90% of which is provided by the U.S. Olympic Committee. "What George Howie has done in terms of fund raising has been done so . . . well, let's just say that he didn't have a chance of succeeding," Corby says. "He can't even get his organization together to ask Heiden to contribute."

Incredible but true, Heiden, who's now a pre-med student at Stanford, has never been directly approached by Howie about fund raising for the speed skating team. The only time Heiden was asked for help was when a skater, 24-year-old Mike Plant, requested it. Heiden

continued

responded by helping to persuade Atari Inc. to contribute to the training expenses of a handful of the top skaters, a commitment of some \$225,000 over three years. Asked why he has not personally appealed to Heiden for help, Sandvig replies, "Why blame us? I think that he has some responsibility, too. Why can't he come forward and offer to help? He knows our situation."

If the purpose of keeping 55 skaters on the national team was to help develop young talent, the plan failed. On the ice, the only U.S. skaters who showed improvement on the international level under Mueller and Corby were the men sprinters. Thometz went from sixth place overall in the 1982 World Sprint Championships to fourth in 1983 and stands a chance to come away with a medal in the 500 or 1,000 at Sarajevo. Erik Henriksen, 24, the self-described Muhammad Ali of speed skating, improved from 11th to sixth overall. Henriksen has a picture of himself with Ali that was taken last year on a transatlantic flight, at which time Henriksen exuberantly told Ali, "You're the greatest in boxing, and I'm the greatest in speed skating." Well, maybe not, but Henriksen will be a dark horse in both the 1,000 and 1,500. The rest of the U.S. team has been a disaster. With the possible exception of Mary Decker—a long shot in the 3,000—the U.S. women have virtually no chance of winning a medal in Sarajevo.

Differences between Corby, Mueller and Sandvig came to a head last February when Sandvig, who was on the U.S. Olympic speed skating squad in 1952, '56 and '60, traveled to Europe to "help" with the world championships. "He didn't come over to help," claims Corby. "He came over on an evidence-gathering mission to find out if the skaters were happy."

Sandvig denies this. "That wasn't my purpose," he says. "One of our skaters, Nancy Swider, came up to me after the worlds and said the girls were very frustrated with the coaching. Naturally I was concerned. The only other skater I talked to was Thometz, and I asked him during a bus ride if he had been working with Bob and if we had a coaching problem."

Thometz, who defended Corby and Mueller, later told his coaches of the exchange. Upset that Sandvig had gone behind their backs at such a critical stage in the season, Corby and Mueller resigned

during the World Sprint Championships banquet on Feb. 27. The resignation was accepted; a USISA board member later approached Holm and asked her to apply for the Olympic job.

Unfortunately, it wasn't quite as simple as slam, bam, don't-let-the-door-hut-you-in-the-can, Messrs. Corby and



Sandvig (above) says he went to Europe to help. Corby says Sandvig came to snoop.



Mueller. "If you switch football coaches in the middle of the season, the players have no choice but to stick with the second coach," says Sandvig. "But we don't have that sort of power."

USISA doesn't have that sort of power because U.S. skaters have had a long tradition of training independently or with the coach of their choice, and the skaters

pay training-camp expenses out of their own pockets. Except for a pittance here and there, the only things USISA picks up are the salary and travel expenses of the coach. When the USISA met on Sept. 10, by which time Mueller had decided to become a competitor again, some of the skaters who had trained under Corby showed up to plead for his rehiring. They were rebuffed. "The skaters have no say," says Plant, one of those who fought for Corby. "I had sent a letter to the board on behalf of all of us who had trained with Corby, all the top male skaters except one or two, but we just ran up against a dead end."

One of the reasons might have been that Corby wanted \$8,000 to work with the skaters through the Olympics. The board agreed to contribute only \$1,500. It also suggested that every skater who wanted to train with Corby should pay him \$500 out of his or her own pocket. "They thought that was very humorous," says Thometz. Certainly Corby wasn't laughing; he chose to continue working as a physical therapist in a Madison hospital, rather than go to Germany for such a meager sum.

So instead of paying some \$1,600 each to train under USISA's Coach Holm in Norway, a third of the U.S. team preferred to go it alone in Inzell. "It's a definite disadvantage not to have a coach," says Plant. "It's such a technical sport you have to watch the little things that you're doing wrong. It's just a headache, and when you're training four times a day, and you're tired..." He pauses. "It would be nice to have someone push you along a little bit."

Mueller, who may still be America's best sprinter, actually sees an advantage in the rift. "It makes our guys in Inzell work a little bit harder," he says. "And if we are good, then it won't be because of some program made up by USISA, but because of a program made up by individuals and because of a lot of hard-working, enthusiastic kids."

Which is more or less the way it has always been in U.S. speed skating. Holm recalls that when she was skating, she worked out with the Dutch team more than with the Americans. It is, after all, a highly individual sport. Still, one can't help but consider these words from Corby: "I couldn't let things go by just so I could be the Olympic coach. These kids work so hard, so far beyond ordinary limits. They deserve better."

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No Glitz, But Maybe Glory

Norm Nixon has traded cruising the Strip in Los Angeles for driving the lane in San Diego **by BRUCE NEWMAN**

It was a Friday night last spring on Sunset Strip in Los Angeles, a cool evening full of possibility, and Norm Nixon was looking for the fast lane. Traffic was at a near standstill, but Nixon gunned his white Mercedes through a small opening and then swung left into a lot next to the Roxy music club. Outside the Roxy there was no sign of human life, just valet parking attendants. Nixon surrendered his car to them, slid past a doorman and went quickly up some stairs to On The Rox, a private club that caters to the Hollywood glitter crowd.

Within minutes of his arrival, Nixon was seated on an overstuffed couch, sandwiched between two especially luscious blondes. One of the women was Michelle Phillips, once Mama Michelle of the Mamas and the Papas, and she wanted to have her picture taken with Nixon. A few feet away, Jack Nicholson leaned against the bar and watched, patiently waiting for his turn with Nixon. Phillips held on tight to one of Nixon's

continued

A point man again, Nixon made these two points—and his own—in beating the Lakers.



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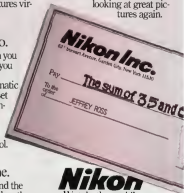
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arms, and then she put her lips close to his ear as the camera began to flash. "I just want to thank you, Norman," she purred. "You've given me so many nights of pleasure." Outside, the traffic continued its languid bump and grind along the Strip, but Nixon was moving easily through the night now. He was cruising in the fast lane.

Nixon had indeed spent most of his six years in L.A. with his foot planted firmly on the gas. Not only was his night life jet-set fast, but Nixon also was the quicksilver point guard for the Los Angeles Lakers—a team followed by adoring fans like Nicholson, Phillips and almost everybody else ever featured in the "Chatter" section of *PEOPLE* magazine. Nixon wasn't the most famous or recognizable of the Lakers, but it was precisely because of his relatively low profile—Nixon is 6' 2"—and his sophistication that he was able to move so comfortably among the Beautiful People who eagerly sought his attention. Then one day last month Nixon was traded to the San Diego Clippers.

The deal was announced on Oct. 10, the day before Nixon's 28th birthday, and that night some friends threw a combination birthday and farewell dinner party at Mr. Chow's, the ne plus ultra in Beverly Hills see-and-be-seen dining. In addition to five of his former Laker teammates, "Jack and Lou were there, and so were Burt and Carole," Nixon says. Like a foreign film, Nixon's life occasionally requires subtitles. So for the benefit of the terminally un-hip, those first names belong to Nicholson, movie producer Lou The Rocky Horror Picture Show Adler and the songwriting duo of Burt Bacharach and Carole Bayer Sager. "It was the Last Supper," Nixon says. "We just sat there around the table all night, drinking shots and talking about life."

The next day Nixon moved into Room 239 at the Sports Arena Travel Lodge in San Diego, 120 miles and a world away from the L.A. dazzle he'd thrived in. Nixon says he was "devastated" by the trade that sent him to the Clippers in exchange for backup Center Swen Nater and rookie Guard Byron Scott, but the deal may very well turn out to be the best thing that ever happened to him. Though he's arguably the quickest player in the NBA and one of the league's best jump shooters, Nixon was nevertheless considered something of a luxury on the talent-rich Lakers, one of the few luxuries that own-



After making former mate Michael Cooper seem a chump, Nixon got chummy.

er Jerry Buss has ever given any evidence of feeling he could live without. Already Nixon has proved his value to the Clippers by igniting their running game; thus, even though San Diego suffered through a 0-4 East Coast road trip last week that dropped its record to 3-6, the Clippers are optimistic that they can improve over their disastrous 25-57 mark of last season. With Center Bill Walton and Forward Terry Cummings to dish the ball off to, Nixon at week's end was averaging 11.7 assists per game, third in the league to Magic Johnson of the Lakers and Johnny Moore of the Spurs. It so happens that Johnson became one of Nixon's closest friends during the four seasons they played together in L.A., and was probably the player most responsible for Nixon's being traded.

Although Nixon has been forced to alter a life-style he loved, the ironic result is that he suddenly has an opportunity to become an acclaimed player, a situation that might never have developed had he not left L.A. Had Nixon stayed with the Lakers, he almost surely would have been remembered as the "other" guard who played alongside Johnson. The 6' 9" Johnson is, like Nixon, a point guard, perhaps the best one to play in the NBA.

continued



in more than a decade. It's because of him that Nixon is usually described as the best "pure" or "legitimate" point guard in the league, those being euphemisms for short. Because of his tremendous size, Johnson can see and do things on a basketball court that Nixon and other noted point guards, such as Philadelphia's Mo Cheeks and Kansas City's Larry Drew, simply cannot. "Physically, I'm a petite guy and I know my limitations," Nixon says. "My size has always been my biggest deficiency."

The trouble with being the best pure point guard in the NBA—which Nixon is and has been for several years—is that nobody seems to care much. Nixon has lamented for so long about not getting sufficient esteem that he has become the ultimate media paradox: He's widely recognized by the press as a player who gets little recognition. When he was with the Lakers and living in Johnson's long shadow, Nixon often felt taken for granted and, as a result, was frequently subject to sudden mood swings. In the course of a single day he could feel overconfident, underwhelmed, overjoyed, underpaid, overlooked, overworked, underappreciated, up in arms and down in the mouth. Many of these feelings would come upon him simultaneously, and that would just make Nixon play a little bit harder. "I think Norman sometimes feels it's him against the world," says Lakers Coach Pat Riley. "It's as if he believes he constantly has to prove himself. And that's understandable. If you're going to be a point guard—a position where you're not as big and strong as everybody else—you have to be like an animal that's been backed into a corner."

Outwardly, however, Nixon gives every indication of being a supremely confident player. "I know I'm the best at what I do," he says. "There's nobody else in the game who can do all the things I can." And yet, despite his importance to the Lakers while they were winning two championships, Nixon was never considered to be quite as accomplished as Seattle's Gus Williams; he was not Rookie of the Year, as Phil Ford was when he was with Kansas City; and he wasn't the No. 1 pick in the draft, as John Lucas was with Houston. "None of those guys ever had to challenge me," Nixon says. "They came into the league rated ahead of me." He considers Drew his only close rival among the standard-sized point guards, although there is still some strong, if

misguided, sentiment in the East that Cheeks is better than either of them. Nixon, for one, doesn't subscribe to that. "Cheeks could be [as good]," Nixon says, "but he's not aggressive enough offensively."

It's not only Nixon's mouth that roars. He plays the game with ferocious quickness and the instincts of a killer. When Nixon moves forward with the ball, in a state of accelerating fury, he resembles the port of a cyclone that touches down—Stormin' Norman, always picking up ground. "He's a rocket," says Phoenix Coach John MacLeod. "Our problem has always been that we not only can't guard him, we can't even get close to him. For ball handling, playmaking, ability to run the break and jump-shooting, I don't think there's anybody who gives you all the dimensions Nixon does."

Nobody was all that excited about Nixon's dimensions when he was coming out of Duquesne in 1977. Not only was he not the Lakers' first pick in the draft that year, he wasn't even their first choice among point guards. L.A. took Maryland's Brad Davis before selecting Nixon with the last of the three first-



round draft choices it had stockpiled that year. "I'm sure they didn't know who the hell I was," Nixon says.

Jerry West was in his second year as head coach of the Lakers that season, and although by the second day of rookie training camp it was clear Nixon would be Los Angeles' playmaker, West made it his business to ride Nixon hard and often. West, of course, had been one of the game's legendary players, but Nixon—who had grown up in Macon, Ga., think-



Nixon has moved south but his dogs, shown here last spring, still reside in Los Angeles.



It's no surprise that Nixon, who's given to blowing his own horn, plays the trumpet.

Nixon had always known that his fiercely held opinions would eventually cause him trouble. "I was the one who opened his mouth," he said last spring. "I think I put people in an uncomfortable position because I force their hand. And I've put myself in a dangerous position, because some people don't like that stuff I'm sure when I'm no longer able to do it, they'll deal with me accordingly." The Lakers obviously had serious questions about why Nixon was no longer able to do it during the latter stages of the 1982-83 season, because last summer L.A. had Nixon investigated. The investigation apparently turned up nothing and was dropped. And then, coincidentally, so was Nixon. This season he has already begun to hear of rumors that he does indeed have a drug problem.

"I knew somebody was following me, but I thought they were trying to rob my house," Nixon says. "What they are doing is trying to rob me of my credibility. Now I hear the Lakers are saying that the untold story about the trade hasn't come out yet. But I don't worry about that stuff because the people who know me know I'm no junkie, that I couldn't practice and play the way I do if I had a drug problem."

Nixon is less concerned about gossip-mongering than he is about reaffirming his credentials as the game's best at his job. He had been unable to operate primarily as a point guard since Johnson came to the Lakers in 1979. "During Magic's first year the ball was taken away from me," Nixon says. "It was frustrating. After handling the ball all the time for two years, I thought I had proven myself at my position." The Lakers had started out that 1979-80 season in a two-guard set, but after Head Coach Jack McKinney was injured in a bicycling accident and replaced by his assistant, Paul Westhead, L.A. began to shift to a new alignment, with Magic out front and Nixon running the baseline. "I don't think I ever adjusted to that," Nixon says. "I had a mental block about it. It was a totally different perspective, looking at the side of the basket. My effectiveness was cut down tremendously."

The Lakers won the championship that season with Johnson playing center in the decisive game. In Game 5 of the se-

continued

ing Mr. Clutch was a pedal in Mr. Car—was not terribly impressed with his new coach. "I never saw Jerry West play a basketball game," Nixon would say in 1981, "and I never saw him coach one."

Much of Nixon's antipathy toward West grew out of that first season, when Nixon felt he'd been unduly bullied. "Here I am, a rookie, playing with veterans like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Adrian Dantley, Jamaal Wilkes and Lou Hudson," Nixon says. "So if you're the coach, who are you going to direct your frustration at? I think a lot of it was unfair." During a game in Atlanta that year, West used a time-out to chew out Nixon for mistakes the team had made in falling behind the Hawks. When play resumed, Hawks Coach Hubie Brown brought 5'8" Guard Charlie Criss in, and over the space of the next several minutes Nixon burned seven consecutive jumpers to tie the game. The quiet during the ensuing Atlanta time-out was shattered when one of Nixon's excited female relatives arose in the stands and thundered, "Use him, Norman! Use that chump! They can't put no midget on my boy!"

In 1979 West became a special consultant to the Lakers and in 1982 he was named general manager of the team. It didn't take long for Nixon's name to start coming up in trade rumors. When Nixon had what was, for him, an off season in 1982-83, he blamed it on a case of anemia and tendinitis in his knees, but West thought otherwise. "Norm's always got an answer for everything, especially when he's wrong," West says. "That's one of his big problems."



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ries against the 76ers, Abdul-Jabbar went down with a twisted left ankle, and Nixon had the ring finger of his left hand bent so far back that ligaments were torn and the finger just dangled from his hand. "I looked down at the back of my hand and there was a blank space there," he says.

Nixon's relationship with Westhead worsened considerably that summer. Surgery was required to repair his finger, and there was some question at the time whether he would ever play again. Nixon was advised by the Lakers' physician to

The 1980-81 season was a nightmare. Johnson tore the cartilage of his left knee in November, and when he tried to come back for the playoffs, chaos reigned and the Lakers lost to Houston in a three-game maneuver. True to form, Nixon was in the middle of the resultant controversy. A throwaway remark he had made in the *Los Angeles Times* casually talking about Magic's lasting impact on the game had annoyed Johnson enough to cause him to accuse unnamed teammates of "jealousy." When Johnson played poorly in the final loss to Houston, Nixon caught most of the blame.

"I was a victim that time," he says. "When we lost, all of a sudden I was the one who caused all the problems. They actually told me I was responsible for the way Magic played in that last game because I upset him." If it accomplished nothing else, the dispute brought Johnson and Nixon, who were always friends, closer together. "After that," says Johnson, "we said to each other, 'O.K., you can have an ego as big as a building as long as we win.' Norm's a very proud dude. What happened was no personal battle between the two of us. We were just trying to figure out each other's roles."

Nixon's grumblings became more muted, but he never quite got over the fire he drew. Now that he's in San Diego, at a safe remove from the egos of the Lakers, Nixon says he's finally relieved. "I'm wanted here," he says. "My

team wants me to play well. It's nice to be away from a negative environment because even a minute amount of negativity can be detrimental."

If Nixon wasn't misunderstood in Los Angeles, some of his finer qualities may have been overlooked. "Everything that's ever been written about Norm has said he's a rebel, he's a militant, he's trouble," says Riley. "But he's none of those things. He's just Norm—a very tough and yet in many ways a very insecure man who needs love."

No matter where Nixon goes, it seems there's always someone there trying to fulfill that need. Nixon is single, intelligent, wealthy, good-looking and an impeccable dresser, and women seem to find him irresistible. He's fond of wearing hand-tailored leather pants, particularly for the response they provoke in the sport's more button-down management circles. "There's something about wearing leather pants," he says. "They know you've got to be going somewhere awful to do something crazy."

Nixon has never wasted much energy denying the extravagant claims made by others about his sexual prowess. "They think I bleep five times a day, bleep myself to death," he says. "If I did half the stuff they say I do, I wouldn't be able to play," he says. "People like to speculate about what I do, and I like to let them. It gives them something to talk about."

Playing in San Diego has been an easier adjustment for Nixon than living there. After a month in the motel, he recently moved into the decidedly tonier digs of one of his millionaire friends at the fashionable La Costa resort in Carlsbad, about 30 miles north of San Diego. Nixon's home in the Baldwin Hills area of Los Angeles was recently being occupied by his lady friend, Debbie Allen, the wonderful dancer from the television series *Fame* with whom he spent part of the summer traveling in Europe. For the time being, that's also where he has left his two dogs, the aquarium full of exotic fish and the trumpet he liked to play to himself when he got up in the morning. "People used to be really shocked when they would come by my house and see I have dogs and plants because they think I'm never home," Nixon says. He insists he is a regular homebody who is never happier than when he is reading a good book. He recently curled up in bed with *The Trojan Women*, the play by Euripides, not the entire coed population of USC.

According to the book in the NBA, you can't win without size. What's sometimes forgotten, however, is that small is a size, too. Nixon was often overlooked in Los Angeles because he had small size, but with the Clippers he has managed to turn an abundance of litle-ness into a king-size virtue. Which is to say that little Norman Nixon may have had to go to San Diego to finally become truly big.



Nixon and Allen get a big kick out of seeing each other.

take the summer off, the feeling being that with rest his finger might be ready when training camp opened. In the team's offices one day, Nixon ran into Westhead, who said he'd like Nixon to play in the L.A. summer league, a proving ground primarily for rookies and free agents, to get himself into shape. Nixon was furious, but he choked back his anger and looked Westhead squarely in the eye. "Sure, Paul," he replied, "I'll be glad to. Just have Kareem pick me up on his way out there."

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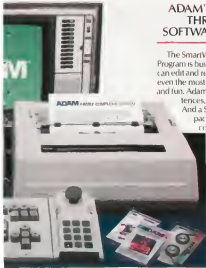
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Of course it's silly, and of course it's

A year ago, the high-riding Pac-10 had plenty to shout about, but this season all's quiet on the Western front by **DOUGLAS S. LOONEY**



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fun for the Ducks, who have had precious little to quack about in recent years. But, above all, something as dizzy as this promotion is perfect for the Pac-10, which has gone absolutely quazy this year. In 1982, the league had an out-of-conference record of 26-10-1 (.716); three of its teams were among the top seven in the final wire-service polls, with UCLA fifth, Arizona State sixth and Washington seventh; each of those won its bowl game: Rose, Fiesta and Aloha, respectively; and an extraordinary 55 of the conference's players were drafted by the NFL. All of which made the Pac-10—no argument—the best major conference in the land. This year, it is—no argument, please—the worst.

The Pac-10's record against non-conference opponents stands at a modest 14-18-1 (.439). On the other hand, the non-conference mark of the Southeast-

continued



The fresh have big shoes to fill.

ern Conference is 30-13-3 (.685), the Big Eight 20-12-1 (.621), the Big Ten 12-8 (.600) and the Southwest 14-12-1 (.537). Washington (No. 19) is the sole Pac-10 representative in the **SPORTS ILLUSTRATED** Top 20. USC Assistant Coach Foster Andersen says of the league, "In truth, we're not what we have been in total quality. You watch the pro draft this year. There won't be a whole lot of players from the West Coast taken."

However, UCLA Coach Terry Donahue disputes the contention that the league has quacked up. "Last year our success was almost ridiculous," he says. "But you can line up five teams in this conference that are real good and they can play with any five teams from any conference."

Sure you can, and the Pac-10 will lose four of them, maybe all five. Consider that the triumvirate that is the traditional heart and soul of the league—USC, UCLA and Stanford—has amassed a record against non-conference opponents of 0-9-1. Southern Cal has fallen on such hard times that it's widely rumored that the Trojans have dropped football but haven't told anybody. On Saturday USC's record fell to 4-5-1 after it lost to Washington, 24-0, the first time the Trojans have been shut out in 187 games. Says USC's first-year head coach, Ted Tollner, "We have some outstanding

products at USC, but they're all in the National Football League." And John Elway-less Stanford is 1-9, but that mark is misleading; the Cardinal isn't that good. After Stanford lost on Oct. 9 to Oregon State, which hadn't won a conference game since 1979, someone asked beleaguered Cardinal Coach Paul Wiggan what he had learned from the films. Growled Wiggan, "We burned them." Last week, Stanford burned Wiggan, by firing him, effective at the end of the season. UCLA, with a record of 5-4-1, beat Washington, which probably has the best team in the Pac-10, but the Bruins did nothing more than throw mild scares into Nebraska and Georgia earlier this year.

Conference Commissioner Tom Hansen says, "We haven't been embarrassed." That would seem to indicate a tolerance for embarrassment on about the Rodney Dangerfield level. To wit:

Was it not embarrassing when Washington—seemingly the one bastion of ability and stability in the league after a sturdy win over then No. 1 ranked Michigan—rolled into Baton Rouge and was demolished 40-14 by an LSU team that has yet to win its first SEC game?

Was it not embarrassing when South-

ern Cal went to Columbia, S.C. for a little hit-and-giggle contest with the unremarkable South Carolina Gamecocks, and got blitzed 38-14?

Was it not embarrassing when Oregon lost its opener to Pacific, a hell of an ocean but an unknown football team, 21-15?

And within the conference, was it not embarrassing when Oregon State's defense ended up with too many men on the field—40 to be exact, 15 in all—and Arizona's Tom Tunnicliffe still completed an 11-yard pass?

As futile as the Pac-10 has been outside the conference, the wonder is that all the games inside the conference don't end in ties. Some do, of course. Arizona, with the talent to be a national championship contender, got itself knotted up 33-33 by Cal. Two weeks later, the Wildcats got beaten by—get your quackers ready—Oregon, 19-10. In Tucson.

On Nov. 5, Arizona State, a team then 4-2-1 and in the thick of the fight to get to the Rose Bowl, played Cal, which traditionally is in the thick of the fight not to humiliate itself. Cal won 26-24. On and on it goes.

Whatever, it has all been so qwaszy that

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN HUBNERDARTH



Probation—and its ban on TV games—has hurt recruiting by USC and Arizona.

when Oregon whipped Cal and Arizona on successive Saturdays and shared the league lead—briefly—with a 2-0 record. T-shirts were printed up on which the O in Oregon was filled with a rose. But even after beating Stanford 16-7 on Saturday, the Ducks are 3-3 in the conference and obviously will do their bowling only at the Emerald Lanes on Oakway Road.

There are other measures that show how far the Pac-10 has nose-dived. NCAA Director of Statistics Jim Van Valkenburg says, "The Pac-10 is having a big passing year. That tells me they're not doing very well. You guys to catch up." The fact that the Pac-10 leads the nation in average passing yardage per team per game (216.1 yards) is bad news. Within the conference, Cal (2-4-1) is first in passing offense (279.6 yards a game).

But why did the Pac-10 tumble so far so fast?

The central reason is the loss of 128 seniors who started the last game of 1982; indeed, of the 28 players chosen to the all-conference team last year, 22 were seniors. In comparison, only 88 seniors started for the Pac-10 teams last Saturday. Especially devastated were Arizona State, which had 13 senior starters last year and now has only four, and USC, with 17 last year and eight this. The stars of last season's graduating group made up a whopping 25% of the first three rounds of the NFL draft. And the 38 draftees from USC, Washington, UCLA and Arizona State were more than the total from any other entire conference.

Besides the loss of so many outstanding players, USC also is fighting the double whammy of probation for a ticket-scalping scheme involving some players and an assistant coach—the Trojans are ineligible for the conference title and any bowl this year, and cannot appear on television until the 1984 postseason—and the arrival of a new coach. Arizona, also on probation, has crumbled despite lofty preseason dreams—SI picked the Wildcats third—and further deterioration may set in. No matter what coaches say, probation is almost always an imposing opponent. It makes recruiting tougher and cuts down incentives for players already on hand.

Another of the Pac-10's shortcomings is that while seven teams have their top '82 quarterbacks back, only Washington's Steve Pelluer and Cal's Gabe Gilbert have performed up to expectations.

continued



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Especially disappointing has been Sean Salisbury at USC; he is fifth in the conference in passing efficiency. At UCLA, Donahue benched his starter, Rick Neuheisel, on Oct. 1, in favor of junior Steve Bono. But after Bono separated his right shoulder, Neuheisel was born again. He responded by leading the Bruins on a string of five consecutive victories, which ended with a 27-24 loss to Arizona on Saturday. Both Oregon quarterbacks, Mike Owens and Mike Jorgensen, fought injuries all season, and two weeks ago Jorgensen broke a bone in his right leg.

Coach Jim Walden, who gets high marks for bringing respectability to Washington State, which other members of the Pac-10 seem to think is located somewhere in Idaho or Montana, believes the quality of the West Coast athlete—whence the Pac-10 recruits almost exclusively—is off and has been for several years. Further, he notes, "You had the Arizona schools coming into the league [in 1978], and they showed no particular respect for the hierarchy." Walden, who also has demonstrated a distinct disregard for the old order, says that when a team loses, "it loses a little bit in mystique. You let me beat you once, and my guys will know that they can do it. Then they'll think they can do it again. That's called confidence."

Further, the Pac-10 does labor under a league rule that allows each school only 90 scholarships versus the 95 allowed by



After the 1982 season, NFL teams drafted 55 Pac-10 players.

the NCAA. Pac-10 coaches scream that this limitation puts them at a competitive disadvantage, and they're right; the university presidents say live with it and save the money, and they're right. But more important in the long run, this means that each year the Pac-10 loses a total of 50 players to the competition.

When USC was upset 26-20 by Kansas in September, the Jayhawks' star was Quarterback Frank Seurer from Huntington Beach, Calif. At Illinois, five starters were pulled out of the California talent pool. Speaking of recruitment of Californians by non-Pac-10 schools, Neuheisel says, "Too many people have found the fountain." Southern Cal Linebacker Jack Del Rio thinks his conference is losing an increasing number of players who would rather play right away at smaller schools, particularly the ones in the Pacific Coast Athletic Association, than spend two or more years in the Pac-10 waiting their turn.

And, with the notable exception of Washington

and perhaps UCLA, conference schools generally have not depended on redshirting and/or the use of walk-ons to build depth. Some, like USC and Stanford, are too expensive—tuition plus room and board at those schools runs to nearly \$13,000 per year—for many walk-on players to be able to pay their own way. Some, especially Cal and Stanford, are too academically rigorous to encourage walk-ons. And the rest, especially the Oregon schools and Washington State, are so short of depth that redshirting is not a very important factor.

Yet, for all these woes, nobody believes that these hard times for the Pac-10 will last. Southern Cal's Andersen says, "It's only down for this year. Next year, it'll be right back up there." He's probably right. Take Arizona State. The Sun Devils, who have been troubled by an inexperienced defense this year, will have 21 of their top 22 defensive players back in 1984. Among the players expected to return the Pac-10 to the heights are quarterbacks Gilbert and Stanford's hotshot freshman, John Paye. Then there are Washington Running Back Jacques Robinson, tailbacks Darryl Clack of Arizona State and Vance Johnson of Arizona. Likely as not, 1983 will seem only a dim memory, an aberration, and 1984 will be a year to go qway over. Probably.



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ing, a central locking system and a host of other amenities.

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by William Leggett

Patrick-Louis Biancone, the 31-year-old trainer of All Along, calls her *Cheval de Fer*, the Iron Horse. Jockey Walter Swinburn rates the 4-year-old filly, "the equal of Shergar," England's kidnapped wonder colt, who was syndicated in 1981 for \$18.7 million. Swinburn should know. He has ridden them both. Many who have competed against All Along feel her name should be changed to All Alone because she wins with such ease it approaches contempt. Years—nay, generations—from now, racing fans may still be debating just what to call the extraordinary bay lady who, in a 42-day span, advanced from The Horse of September-October to The Horse of the Year to a brand-new title she forged for herself: The Horse of the World.

Last Saturday afternoon, as the harsh fists of winter began knocking on Maryland's door, All Along easily defeated seven rivals in the 1½-mile Washington, D.C. International at Laurel Race Course and carried off a prize of \$1,150,000, the richest winner's purse in thoroughbred history. In six weeks All Along has won four of the world's most important races: Paris' \$531,675 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe at Longchamp; Canada's \$520,350 Rothmans International at Woodbine; New York's \$585,700 Turf Classic at Aqueduct; and the U.S. race best known to Europeans, the \$250,000 International. By sweeping the Rothmans, the Turf Classic and the International, All Along won a \$1 million bonus. In sum, in her four big races All Along ran 6½ miles, defeated 51 world-class opponents and earned \$2,126,380 for her owner, the renowned Parisian art dealer Daniel Wildenstein. Some people may have a Manet, but only Wildenstein has an All Along.

All Along won the Arc running from left to right, her three North American races moving from right to left, and only in Paris did she have a firm turf course. On this continent she found yielding courses that she doesn't particularly care for. Following her win at soggy Laurel, however, it must now be assumed that she can run through the briars and the brambles and the bushes where a rabbit



All Along took the lead at the mile, but Swinburn kept looking for a challenger.

All Along is all alone

A filly wins the International—and now stands atop the horse world

wouldn't go. All Along was held in such esteem by the crowd at Laurel that she paid only \$2.80 for each \$2 win bet. In 1964, Horse of the Year Kelso returned \$4.40 on winning the International, while the 1970 Horse of the Year, Fort Marcy, paid \$4.20. Turf champion Run The Gantlet paid \$3.60 in 1971, and last year's top grass filly, April Run, paid \$3.40. In 31 previous runnings of the event none of the 283 starters had ever been held in the esteem accorded All Along.

The Arc and The North American Turf Triple, as the bonus races are called, are run only 42 days apart, and some observers suspected that All Along might lose her form at Laurel. "Quite often a horse will tail off after winning three races in such a short period of time [28 days]," said Jockey Steve Cauthen, who rode England's Cormorant Wood at Laurel. "I'm not saying she will, but that is



what you have to hope if you are going against her." Charlie Whittingham, one of the world's most successful conditioners, was asked why he decided to run the U.S. representative, Palikarakis, against All Along after losing to her by three lengths in Canada. "We had some trouble in the Rothmans," said Whittingham. "Palikarakis jumped up in the air when he ran across the dirt patch in the track. Also, Palikarakis loves soft going, and it often comes up soft at Laurel. My horse won the Arlington Handicap on soft go-

continued

ing in September by nearly 10 lengths. All Along had to ship to Canada from France, and she came out of post position 24 to win the Rothmans. Then she had to ship to New York and then to Baltimore. That's a tough road for any filly. Hell, my horse is named after some kind of Greek warrior, and he may have to be that to beat her. But the more rain the merrier."

It rained hard at Laurel all day Thursday and harder still Friday morning. "I don't like this at all," said Biancone. "Everybody else seems to want rain so that they'll have a chance to beat All Along. If the rain keeps up I'll do a sun dance." Around lunchtime Friday the rain ceased, but Laurel's course was wet as a drenched sponge. So wet, in fact,

goodby kisses to the field. All Along moved three lengths in front, then five. Swinburn took seven looks backward before hitting the finish line $3\frac{1}{4}$ lengths in front. Welsh Term, a 44-1 shot, finished second and Majesty's Prince, a U.S. entry, third. The filly's winning time of 2:35 over the goosy going was only so-so, but as most racing men will tell you, winning is what matters; time only counts when one is in jail.

Racing lore holds that a good horse can come from anywhere, but the barn of Wildenstein is not just anywhere. Wildenstein owns 250 horses (yep, horses!). Until All Along came along his best known was the remarkable filly Allez France, who won the 1974 Arc. Last Sat-

soft going in the Arc. It was after that race that the plan came up."

Ah, yes, the plan. At Thanksgiving time last year, All Along ran in the Japan Cup in Tokyo and finished second. It was then that the trainer and owner decided to try to win this year's Arc and what Biancone calls "The American Triple."

"The fact that there was a \$1 million bonus for winning the Triple had a lot to do with it," Biancone says. "If the bonus had been \$2 million, All Along would have come over here quicker."

All Along was brought up to this year's Arc carefully: one race in June, one in July, one in September. With no wins. Still, Biancone felt he had an excellent chance in the Arc because he had the filly in perfect condition and had a commitment from Europe's best jockey, Lester Piggott, to ride her. But Piggott changed his mind, which made Wildenstein so furious he decreed that Piggott would never ride one of his horses again. Several other jockeys were offered the mount on All Along before Biancone and Wildenstein selected the 22-year-old Swinburn. All Along won the Arc at odds of 17-1 while Piggott finished 13th on Awaasif.

Fillies have won the last five runnings of the Arc, but no Arc winner had ever competed in the Rothmans. Of the five previous Arc winners to try Laurel, none had won. But if All Along could travel, the master plan of Wildenstein and Biancone could reach fruition—and All Along ships better than Auntie Mame. "She likes to go places," Biancone says. "She enjoys new surroundings. She liked Canada and loved New York."

There are some horsemen willing to concede the title of Horse of the World to All Along, while questioning her right to be named the North American Horse of the Year. International racing has certainly not caught on in the U.S., as the crowds of 22,000 for the Turf Classic at Aqueduct and the 20,000 at Laurel indicate, and the admirers of 2-year-old Devil's Bag and 3-year-old Slew o' Gold undoubtedly feel that their horses are more worthy representatives of the best in American racing. Granted, All Along "got good" in a short period of time and she has raced only on grass, but she beat colts and fillies of all ages in her sweep of the North American Turf Triple. In a racing year so murky and confusing, this filly stands out like a beacon. In so many ways she was the horse that everyone had been waiting for. All along.



They're in the money: Biancone and Wildenstein admire All Along's \$1 million bonus.

that Canada's representative, Nijinsky's Secret, a speed horse, was scratched. Then the question was: Who would go to the lead?

As things turned out, two other French horses, Lovely Dancer and Welsh Term, went to the front early, with Palikarakas not far behind. Swinburn kept All Along back in the pack, the jockey's rear end high in the air. All Along seemed to get into trouble a couple of times, but going down the backstretch Swinburn's light blue cap could be seen moving up on the outside. And then, swoosh! All Along bounced to the lead just before the mile and Swinburn took a look back over his right shoulder. He could have thrown

urday's victory was particularly sweet for the art dealer. Wildenstein had tried to win the International four times, but Wayne's third in 1978 was his best finish.

All Along made her first start in November of 1981 at Amiens, one of the many provincial tracks that dot the French countryside, and dead-headed with a horse named Tarbellissima. In 1982 she won four of nine races, the most important being the Prix Vermeille at Longchamp. In that race she defeated Aktyda, who three weeks later came back and won the Arc while All Along finished 15th. "The Prix Vermeille was a little tougher on her than we thought," Biancone says, "and she didn't take to

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OUR MR. T IS TANTILIZING

Vancouver's not quite the A-Team, but Tony Tanti has become a hit

by Jack Falla

Mary Tanti is on the phone, in full conversational stride, discussing the reticence of her son, 20-year-old Tony, a second-year right wing for the Vancouver Canucks. "Isn't he hard to talk to? So quiet, that boy. I say to him, 'When are you going to find a girl?' He's only had two girl friends, you know. And he says to me, 'Ma, I don't have time.' All he has time for is his hockey."

The words are tumbling out faster now. "He was always such a good boy. Never hung around down at the plaza when we lived in Toronto. But he always had so many games. I'm his mother and I only got to talk to him at the rink."

We don't know what those kids at the shopping plaza are up to nowadays, but, at week's end, Tanti had 19 goals—sec-

ond only to Wayne Gretzky, who had 24—and 14 assists and was in third place in the NHL's scoring race, 21 points behind Gretzky. On Sunday he scored twice and assisted on the game-winning goal as the Canucks pulled it out against the Canadiens 4-3.

In the highly unlikely event that Tanti catches Gretzky, it wouldn't be the first time. In the 1980-81 season, Tanti broke Gretzky's record for goals scored by a first-year player in the Ontario Junior A Hockey League with 81 in 67 games for the Oshawa (Ont.) Generals, a team whose motto is: "Less thunder in the mouth. More lightning in the hands." Tanti fits that dictum to a T.

"I try to play like Mike Bossy," Tanti says of his No. 1 hero, the New York Islander right wing. "Bossy knows where the net is without looking. Sometimes, when my back is to the goal, I can still see the net in my mind. I've always been like

that. It's nothing new, but it's nothing I can explain."

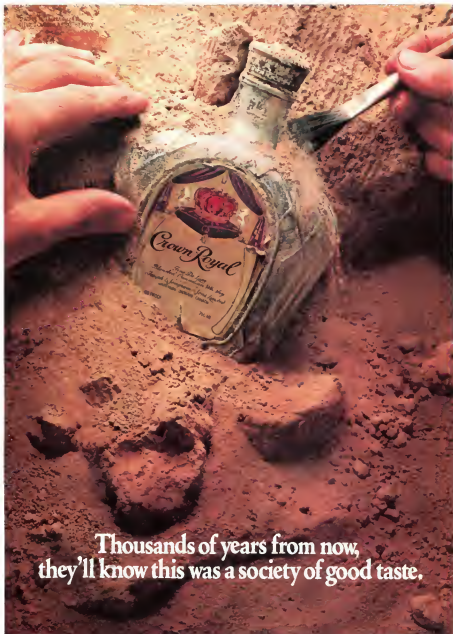
Tanti is not much given to explanations or to talk of any kind. There is not only no thunder in his mouth, there is hardly any sound at all. He has a natural reserve that borders on extreme thyness. "I don't mind signing a few autographs," he says, "but I look at what Gretzky goes through, and I think it's terrible. I couldn't stand it. He gets no privacy."

Considering his celebrity status and exceptional good looks—black hair in tight natural curls framing a face by Botticelli—Tanti would no doubt be a hit in Vancouver's Granville Island discos and bars, but he has chosen an almost ascetic life-style. Tanti will move into a house in suburban Coquitlam on Dec. 1, but for now is renting a basement suite in the

continued

No talk and all action, Tanti worked with lightning speed and his usual magic as he scored his 17th goal, against Winnipeg's Hayward.





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home of sports-shop owners Larry and Nina Luongo. He spends his off-ice hours helping out in the Luongos' store, reading or listening to the tunes of the '60s and '70s, some of which were conceived before he was.

"Bob Dylan is my favorite singer," he says. "I listen to him, Jim Croce or Harry Chapin before games. I like songs that tell a story or have a meaning." Tanti's tastes in reading can tend toward themes of isolation. He just finished reading Canadian author Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*. "It's about this nerdy guy studying wolves, and he lives all alone in the Arctic for six months and..."

But such is Tanti's standoffishness that he was unpopular with his first pro team, the Chicago Black Hawks. The Hawks claimed Tanti in the first round (12th overall) of the 1981 draft and brought him to camp that September. The older players interpreted Tanti's quietness as snobishness. One Chicago veteran was quoted as saying, "If I wasn't so concerned with my own game at the time, I might have taken him aside [and] slapped some sense into him."

"I don't know what the problem was in Chicago," Tanti says, "but maybe part of it was my not realizing that in the NHL guys are playing for a living, and a new guy can't come in and say, 'Hi. I'm Tony Tanti. I'm 19. I'm here to take your job.'"

The Hawks returned Tanti to Oshawa that fall and again last season. The rap against Tanti was that he was too short (5' 9") and not fast or quick enough for the NHL. Chicago did bring him up for a cameo appearance last Dec. 18 in a game against Toronto, and he scored his first NHL goal. However, Tanti was sent back to Oshawa and then traded to Vancouver on Jan. 6 for Wing Curt Fraser.

Tanti learned about the deal from his mother, who had heard news of the trade on the radio while driving from the family home in Mississauga to an Oshawa road game in Bradford, Ont. "When I got to the rink the team was warming up," says Mary Tanti, "so I leaned over the boards and told Tony he'd been traded." As she says, she only gets to talk to him at the rink.

"I was glad," says Tanti. "I don't think they gave me a fair shot in Chicago."

Tanti's eight goals and eight assists in 39 games last year with the Canucks hardly blew the doors out of Pacific Coliseum, but his three goals and three assists in the last nine games of the regular season augured his productivity this year. "It was a case of our finding the right center for him," says Vancouver Coach Roger Neilson, who late last year put Tanti on right wing with Center Patric Sundstrom, 21, the Canucks' best playmaker. The third man on the line, arch-foe Dave (Tiger) Williams, plays left wing, seeing to it that opposing defensemen don't take liberties with Vancouver's two young scoring stars.

Tanti may not need that much protection, however. "I got a lot of penalties in Junior A," he says, "because I never back down. Goal-scorers get attention, but if they come at me to hurt me, I'm coming back at them." Tanti was true to his words last Wednesday in Vancouver. After being slammed into the boards by Winnipeg's Paul MacLean, he came back at his 6-foot, 205-pound antagonist with a cross-check across the shoulder blades and a few punches to the body before linesmen broke up the fight.

Tanti's scoring and toughness have added much needed excitement to the Canucks, who like Neilson's teams in Toronto and Buffalo, play a dull, defensive, clutch-and-grab style that bores fans from Boston to British Columbia. "I used to get most of my goals on instinct," Tanti said Friday after his flip-in of a rebound beat Winnipeg Goaltie Brian Hayward and helped Vancouver to a 4-2 win. "But this season, if I don't see the opening, I can hold the puck until something happens."

"The puck seems to follow him



At selling, Tanti has the touch of a pro.

around," says Neilson, who no doubt wishes the rest of the Canucks would follow Tanti around. But the Canucks need more than Tanti's scoring. As the season neared the quarter pole, the 8-9-1 Canucks had the league's third-worst defense (81 goals allowed), worst penalty-killing record and a mysterious inability to win in their Smythe—a.k.a. the Cream Puff—Division, where they were 0-4-1 before beating the Jets last week.

Tanti aside, that's tantamount to disaster. More lightning, guys. Please. **END**



This season, Tanti's stats show that he isn't the type to lie down on the job—or the ice.



by Sam Moses

Just as the fastest offshore powerboat race in history was being completed last Thursday, the fastest offshore powerboat in history was about five miles from the finish line, going around in circles. At the helm, Al Copeland, owner of the Popeyes, fried chicken chain, was twisting a steering wheel that might as well have been connected to a video game. Ah, the irony of it. His \$600,000 investment—named Popeyes, of course—wasn't getting him any closer to the finish, let alone victory in this race, the second in a three-race series for the Michelob Light/Key West World Championship, the final and biggest event of the offshore powerboat year. And an impressive speed record—103.29 mph—was going to Arneson Special, a boat

Thundering into a new era

At the worlds, 'superboats' foreshadowed expensive new craft offshore

Copeland knew his Popeyes could beat at about three-fourths throttle. If only the steering hadn't broken.

As it turned out, three boats broke the record of 98.18 mph, which had been set in the first race, two days earlier. The speeds were due largely to an unusually calm spell in the Straits of Florida. Popeyes had won that first race but the victory wasn't recognized by the Union of International Motorboating, the world governing body for the sport. Popeyes is a "superboat," the first to take advantage of new Class 1 rules of the American Power Boat Association—rules not yet accepted by the UIM. The old rules limited a boat's length to 45 feet and its engines to a total of 1,000 cubic inches; the new rules set no limits. The APBA has jurisdiction only in the U.S., and because this was a world championship, the old rules were in force.

Popeyes is an eight-ton, 50-foot-long Cougar catamaran. It's 12 feet longer than most of the other Cougar cuts that have been dominating offshore competition, and it has twice as many engines as the others: four 700-horsepower Mercurys with 500-cubic-inch Chevrolet blocks. The boat is spectacularly fast and smooth and, not incidentally, spectacularly expensive.

Building such a craft seemed to Copeland a logical thing to do. Last year he

sometimes brought three boats to a race—a monohull, or deep V, for heavy seas; a 38-foot catamaran for moderate seas; and a quick, 30-foot cat for flat water—and chose among them the morning of the race. Copeland figured that one superboat would be fastest in any kind of water. What's the difference between one \$600,000 boat and three \$200,000 ones, except a couple of trailers? Besides, a rule change has made it more attractive to race one boat all season.

Popeyes was the only superboat in four of the APBA circuit's nine events this year, and it won two of them. But at Key West a rival appeared—far less spectacular, but still super. It was a three-engined, 46-foot Cougar deep V named *MerCruiser Special*. Its owner and driver, George Morales, knew when he ordered the deep V that it would be no match for Popeyes in calm water, but he figured it would be more versatile.

The presence of the two superboats, especially Popeyes, because it was the first, and so mercilessly fast, stirred things up among the other owners by forcing their hands: Either they had to spend more money, or they'd lose. "Everybody's mad at us now, but hey, they had the same shot I did," says Copeland. "You either get with the program or get off the program. You can't harness development."

Garcia's non-superboat, Arneson Special, ended up with the title and speed mark.



"Bull," counters one of the less wealthy competitors in the anti-superboat camp. "Building a boat that's merely longer and heavier and then adding more engines isn't development, it's shopping. There's no point to superboats. They're monstrosities."

Popeyes is both beautiful and awesome-looking. Up on its trailer it's a spectacular edifice—even with Popeye's cheeky mug painted on the hull. From the cockpit its bow goes on like a Navy destroyer's, and eight big exhaust pipes

stick out astern like chrome cannons. When throttle-man and engineer Bill Sirois shoves the four throttles forward, the bow drops and the tachometer needles swing to 6,200 rpm: it's enough to make a horsepower junkie shudder with pleasure. The roar from the engines is felt more than heard, and even as the tiny Keys speed by at 120 miles an hour, the sensation is not so much of speed as of power. Two thousand eight hundred horsepower.

After handily winning the first 96-mile race, on Nov. 8, Popeyes shot out to an early lead in the second over the same course, starting more or less in the heart of Key West. Popeyes had such superior speed that Sirois kept the throttles backed off to 5,000 rpm. Copeland casually checked over his shoulder to see how far back the field was, but then a fitting fractured and steering was lost, allowing Arneson Special, driven by Tony Garcia, to snatch the speed record.

Despite a DNF, Popeyes could still win the world championship—in the APBA's eyes, at least—if it finished first in the 208-mile finale on Saturday—five laps over a longer course. On the first leg, a seven-mile run to Sand Key, the boats were pounding over the chop, and Popeyes and Arneson Special were neck and neck at the turn, chased by last year's winner, Michelob Light, and MerCruiser Special. By the time they were 35 miles into the race, the waves were up to six feet,

too much for Michelob Light, which ended up with a trim tab broken and a hole in the hull. MerCruiser Special's sharp bow sliced through the seas exactly as a deep V is supposed to and passed Popeyes as the two superbosats left Arneson Special behind.

After three laps Popeyes trailed by 13 seconds, and it wasn't clear whether Sirois was merely biding his time or the sea was indeed equalizing things. But suddenly that question seemed to be answered as Popeyes closed the gap and pulled ahead. This didn't last long: an internal shaft snapped in one of the engines, and it was no contest from that moment on. Popeyes continued with three engines and held on to second place, but a second engine blew as the final lap began, forcing Copeland to turn the big cat around and chug home—defeated. Arneson Special finished eight minutes behind MerCruiser Special, which averaged 90.97 mph. But when the points were tallied from all three races, Arneson Special, not MerCruiser Special, was rated the UIM world champion because it's not a superbosat.

But if anything proved that superbosats are the wave of the future—and that big boats are becoming more important than big titles—it was Morales saying he had a 46-foot Cougar cat on order and next year would bring two superbosats to the races despite the disadvantage. And who knows? Maybe Copeland will be ordering his own super deep V.



MerCruiser Special won the event, not the title. Four engines gave Popeyes dazzling speed, but two of them failed in the final race.



Brandon (front) may cow opponents, but not Bushong, who can bench-press two of him.

A back with a gift of grab

Toledo's Mark Brandon, only 5' 7 3/4", is No. 2 in the nation in interceptions

Mark Brandon is very religious, but two years ago as a freshman walk-on cornerback at the University of Toledo, he told a stretcher. On a team questionnaire, he listed his height as 5' 9".

"Yeah, that wasn't really true," admits Brandon, who was actually 5' 6 1/2". "I

guess I was afraid to be ruled out just because I don't have the vital statistics."

These days Marvelous Mark, as he is getting to be known in the Mid-American Conference, needn't worry so much about his statistics. For the past three weeks he had led the NCAA in intercep-

by Jaime Diaz

tions and now is second, with nine. And though he didn't keep up his one-theft-per-game pace last Saturday as Toledo suffered its first defeat of the season, 26-10 to Northern Illinois, 1983 has brought Brandon another dividend: He has grown to 5' 7 3/4".

"Sometimes I can't believe how good things have gone for me this year," says Brandon, a junior broadcasting major who didn't become a starter for Toledo until the eighth game of 1982. "But I guess good things happen when you believe in yourself."

Considering Brandon's physical assets, college recruiters can't really be blamed for not believing in him. Besides being short, he has only average cornerback speed—4.6 for the 40—and a respectable vertical leap of 29 inches. Although he starred for three years as an option-style quarterback and defensive back at Warren (Ohio) Western Reserve High, alma mater of the prodigious Browner brothers, he was not offered any football scholarships. Indeed, his best sport might be baseball, though he hasn't played it at Toledo. He was a .512-hitting second baseman as a high school senior.

"On paper he's not big enough, fast enough or strong enough to play big-time college football," says Dan Surnell, who's in his second full season as Toledo's head coach. "All he is is good enough."

Brandon has been better than good this season. Against archival Bowling Green he saved a 6-3 victory with an interception in the end zone with 13 seconds to play. In a 37-34 thriller over Kent State, Brandon intercepted on the first play from scrimmage and ran 18 yards for a touchdown.

Along the way Brandon broke the Toledo season interception record of seven, which had been held by, among others, Curtis Johnson, a 1969 Toledo graduate and a starter on the Miami Dolphins' 17-0 Super Bowl team in 1972-73.

Confidence, along with great hands and quick feet, is Brandon's stock-in-trade. "If I go out there and think I'm too small, it will take away from my confidence," he reasons. "If people think I'm disadvantaged, it's extra incentive that

continued



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pretty soon everybody's gonna know who I am."

Brandon is better known now, and not just because of football. This year he was Mr. September in a campus-produced calendar entitled "The Men of U.T.," the only football player to be chosen. "They told me it was because of my handsome smile," said Brandon during a stroll amid the gray "collegiate Gothic" architecture of the Toledo campus.

To be sure, opposing teams in the MAC have seen enough of him to list awhile. Although Toledo, second in the nation against the run, is next to last in the MAC against the pass, Brandon has

Playing it tight and tough as he always does, Brandon recovered this fumble (below) in the first quarter against Northern Illinois.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL continued

can help me mentally. A small person has got to have confidence." And when you put around with guys like teammate Jeff Bushong, a 239-pound middle guard who bench-presses 350 pounds, confidence comes in handy.

Simrell had his doubts about Brandon when he first saw him on the practice field. "He's such a positive kid, but I thought, 'I don't know,'" recalls Simrell, who was defensive coordinator in Brandon's freshman year. "Then he just became a thorn in everyone's side. He'd jam up our offense in practice, and he became a great special-teams player. He just wouldn't let us ignore him."

According to Chester and Connie Brandon, who both work on the assembly line at the General Motors plant in Warren, the youngest of their three sons has never let his modest stature keep him from standing out in a crowd.

"Mark is the hard-nose of the family," says Chester. "He's a take-charge person. His size has never held him back; it's just made him more determined."

Mark says he resolved to "give it everything all the time" after his sister, Mary, died of a heart attack at the age of 26. He said the tragedy has strengthened his Baptist faith. "Each time I do something well, deep down I dedicate that to her a little bit."

Brandon's girl friend, Maureen Scott, is a student at Bowling Green. He put a temporary dent in her heart with his



game-saving interception against her school. "All I could think was, 'Who caught that?'" Scott says. "I was so upset. Then my girl friend told me it was Mark, and I thought, 'That little devil.' I had wanted us to win, but I was really happy for him."

Scott says Brandon never became discouraged by his anonymity in college after three years in the spotlight in high school. "Mark doesn't let himself get down," she says. "When he wasn't playing much, he'd just say, 'I'm sorry, but

been beaten for only one touchdown in two years. And his interceptions are a big reason why Toledo leads the nation in turnover margin, averaging 2.3 a game.

In the Rocket defensive scheme, Brandon lines up on the wide side of the field, opposite receivers who are always taller and frequently faster. He is often tested with lob passes in one-on-one coverage, but the challenges have become less frequent. "Mark has the knack for being able to sense the relationship between the quarterback and the receiver," says

continued

Defensive Backfield Coach Steve Gwin. Brandon idolizes the Dallas Cowboys' Everson Walls, but he knows that he is not considered a pro prospect. "He's a fine athlete, but, to be blunt, he wouldn't get much consideration," says Joe Keane, a part-time scout for Buffalo who saw the Northern Illinois game.

Just in case, though, Brandon nurtures a dream—of shooting up a few inches more. Last summer he hung upside down for 20 minutes a day after hearing that during so can make people taller. Although he did grow more than an inch, Brandon isn't absolutely convinced that it was the result of his dangling.

His attitude reflects his healthy adjustment to being small in a big man's game. At a closed-circuit broadcast of the Hagler-Duran fight—Marvelous naturally was pulling for Marvelous—Brandon had to use some of his football moves to see around a tall person who kept standing up in front of him.

"Maybe," he said while straining to see, "I should tell that guy he can block my view sitting down."

THE WEEK

by N. BROOKS CLARK

SOUTHWEST

Lowly Texas Christian threw a scare into Texas before succumbing. The Horned Frogs led 14-3 at halftime after Linebacker Robert Lyles grabbed a Texas fumble in the air and ran 80 yards for one TCU touchdown and Safety Bryon Linwood went 66 yards with an interception for another. Texas responded with two touchdowns and a field goal to go up 20-14, which turned out to be the final score. TCU reached the Longhorn's 15-yard line with eight minutes left but came away empty-handed. Then, with 3:45 to play, Wide Receiver Dwayne May of the Frogs dropped a pass in the end zone. Two minutes later, on a fourth-and-five from the Texas 11, Anthony Galle's pass for May at the goal line was broken up by Cornerback Fred Acorn.

For the fourth time this season, both SMU tailbacks, freshman Jeff Atkins and sophomore Reggie Dupard, ran for more than 100 yards each. Atkins got 132 and Dupard 155 in a 33-7 win over Texas Tech. As well as the

Mustangs are playing—their sole loss was to second-ranked Texas—they may be snubbed by the high-toned bowls. "Everyone knows SMU is a good team," said one representative of a major bowl, "but they're the kind of team that can't help you very much. They're not very exciting, and they don't seem to generate much interest around the country." And SMU Coach Bobby Collins, "If the TV and all that stuff is going to control it, then why don't we just turn pro and go from there?"

SOUTH

"I'm on top of Old Rocky Top right now," said Mississippi Coach Billy Brewer, whose Rebels had beaten Tennessee 13-10 for their fourth win in a row. While Ole Miss relied on a conservative, ball-control offense to roll up 329 yards, the Vols suffered two interceptions, lost a fumble on an apparent touchdown run and had two long returns—one on a punt and one on an interception—wiped out by penalties. "We wrapped it up in red ribbon with mistletoe and everything and gave Ole Miss an early Christmas present," said Tennessee Coach Johnny Majors.

Virginia handed North Carolina its third straight defeat with a 17-14 upset. Pacing the Cavalier defense were Strong Safety Lester Lyles, who had 17 tackles and forced a fumble

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to set up the winning TD, and Linebacker Charlie McDaniels, who made 20 tackles.

Florida State has endured a season of frustration, losing by six points to Tulane, three to Auburn, one to Pitt and, last week, 17-16 to Miami on a 19-yard field goal by the Hurricanes' Jeff Davis on the last play of the game. "This was a fairy-book story with a fairy-book ending," said Miami Coach Howard Schnellenberger. The Hurricanes finished their regular schedule with a 10-1 record and almost certainly will receive an Orange Bowl bid.

Two years ago Southern Mississippi tied Alabama 13-13. Last season the Golden Eagles ended the Tide's 57-game winning streak in Tuscaloosa by a score of 38-29. Afterward bumper stickers that read I WAS THERE WHEN WE RETIRED THE BEAR circulated around Hattiesburg. "After I saw that," said Bama Defensive Tackle Randy Edwards, "I knew we had to teach them a little respect. It's one thing to go out and beat somebody—that's football. But it's another to insult a man who was probably the greatest football coach who ever lived." Edwards made 11 tackles—two for sacks, one for an eight-yard loss—and partially blocked a punt as Alabama won 28-16.

Maryland lost, but also won. The Terrapins took a 52-27 licking from Clemson, but because the Tigers are on probation and their

games don't count in the ACC standings, the Terps will creep away with the conference title. Maryland is 4-1 against ACC competition, while Clemson finished with a 7-0 mark in conference play. There should be no asterisk next to Clemson in the Guinness Book of World Records, however. A Clemson alumni group spent \$23,000, and 3,000 students arrived at Memorial Stadium at 7 a.m. to prepare a display of 310,000 balloons. They were handed out, four at a time, to spectators, who released them as the Tigers ran onto the field. The display broke the record of 300,424 balloons released in Itasca, Ill. last July 4.

With 1:45 to go against North Carolina State, Duke Quarterback Ben Bennett led a nine-play, 67-yard touchdown drive to give the Blue Devils a 27-26 win. Virginia Tech defeated Vanderbilt 21-10 on two interceptions by Strong Safety Ashley Lee. He ran both back for touchdowns—one 88 yards, the other 94. His defensive performance was surpassed only by that of Northwestern (La.) State's Michael Richardson, who led the Demons to a 23-7 victory over Southeastern Louisiana by picking off five passes. He also tackled a Lion would-be punter for a 13-yard loss.

Early last week Eastern Illinois Coach Al
continued

SI TOP 20

1. NEBRASKA (11-0)	1*
2. TEXAS (9-0)	2
3. AUBURN (9-1)	4
4. MIAMI (10-1)	5
5. ILLINOIS (9-1)	6
6. BYU (9-1)	8
7. SMU (8-1)	9
8. CLEMSON (8-1-1)	10
9. GEORGIA (8-1-1)	3
10. FLORIDA (7-2-1)	12
11. MICHIGAN (8-2)	13
12. WEST VIRGINIA (8-2)	14
13. IOWA (8-2)	15
14. BOSTON COLL. (7-2)	7
15. OHIO STATE (8-2)	16
16. MARYLAND (7-3)	11
17. PITT (8-2)	18
18. ALABAMA (7-2)	19
19. WASHINGTON (8-2)	—
20. E. CAROLINA (7-3)	—

*Last week



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AND THE WINNER IS...

The Heisman ballots will be in soon. Who deserves it? Steve Young of BYU, perhaps? If linemen had a chance it might be Pat O'Fenave Tackle Bill Fralic, or even James Goe, a defensive tackle at Northern Arizona who's averaging 13 tackles a game. However, the man at left should win the Heisman handsly. On Saturday he ran for 285 yards and four TDs in Nebraska's 67-13 mauling of Kansas. With 28 touchdowns he has broken the single-season record of 26 set by Lydell Mitchell in 1971, but with 1,943 yards for the year and one game to go, he is far from Marcus Allen's 2,342 of 1981. His name: Mike Rozier, of course.

Moide confirmed to his players that to save about \$3,000 they would travel five hours on a bus to their game at Western Kentucky instead of taking a plane. The players boycotted practice on Monday, but returned on Tuesday after a private meeting of players and coaches. "We know how he feels and he knows how we feel," said Panther Quarterback John Rafferty. "We are going to try to put it out of our minds." Eastern Illinois, which is headed for the Division I-AA playoffs with a 9-2 record, rode the bus without incident and defeated the Hilltoppers 34-14.

MIDWEST Illinois earned a Rose Bowl berth, its first in 20 years, with a 49-21 defeat of Indiana. Following the game the Illini faithful tore down the goalposts for the fourth time this season. Illinois' nine-game winning streak is the school's longest since 1928.

"I told them no one would let up or they'd have to deal with me when the time came to deal out scholarships." So spoke Wichita State Coach Willie Jeffries, whose Shockers, still shocked, upset Division I-AA's top-ranked team, hitherto undefeated and untied Southern Illinois, 28-6. While Southern Illinois lost a fumbled punt, dropped two passes in the end zone and was intercepted four times, Wichita State converted eight of 12 third-down plays in the second half on the savvy running and passing of freshman Quarterback Brian McDonald. Tailback Eric Denison ran for 179 yards.

EAST Syracuse's 21-10 upset of Boston College was oh so sweet for the Orange. After BC won 20-13 on a last-minute touchdown last year, more than a few Syracuse supporters maintained that Eagle Linebacker Steve DeOssie had put Tailback Larry Morris out of the game with a rabid punch. "They used a lot of crap to win that game," Syracuse Coach Dick MacPherson said at the

time, "but it'll come back to hurt them in the long run. I'll tell you one thing. It'll be a long time before they beat us again."

MacPherson had another reason to be angry with BC. Before facing the Eagles in '82, Syracuse had snapped a six-game losing streak, after which MacPherson had expressed his relief with the line, "I see a light at the end of the tunnel, and it's not an oncoming train." The week before last season's game, the BC coaches distributed 90 T-shirts to their team. They were orange, had a picture of a locomotive and read THE TRAIN. After the game MacPherson found out what the BC coaches had done, and was infuriated.

The key to Syracuse's victory this year was its front four, the "4-Wheel Drive" of Jamie Kimmel, Blaise Winter, Bill Pendock and Tim Green. They accomplished what no defense had this season—shocking Quarterback Doug Flutie. They sacked him four times and pressured him into throwing three interceptions. "Maybe I called on Doug too much," said Bicknell. "But he's been getting us the big play all year. Today, he didn't."

Allen Pinkett, Notre Dame's sophomore tailback, rushed for 217 yards and four touchdowns, but the Irish were defeated at Penn State 34-30. "I kept asking what more I could have done to help us win," said Pinkett. "The answer was one more yard." That yard—actually a matter of inches—was the distance not traveled by Notre Dame Quarterback Steve Buehler for a TD as the first half ended with the Nitary Lions on top 13-10. The lead changed hands six times after intermission. Trailing 30-27, Penn State played for good with 26 seconds to play by converting a "98" on a third-and-goal at the Notre Dame eight. "The 98 play is a rollout with a pass-run option," said Lion Quarterback Doug Strang. "When I looked at their defense, I knew the run should be open. As I rolled out, I was sure of it." Strang went for the score, thereby bringing the Lions' record

to 7-4 and dropping the Irish to 6-4. Pinkett wasn't the only back to rush for more than 200 yards. Pitt's Joe McCall got 246 in the Panthers' 38-7 win over Army; Cornell beat Columbia 31-6 as Derrick Harmon of the Big Red ran for 222; and in Colgate's 43-14 victory over Richmond, the Spiders' Jarvis Jennings gained 221, while Rick Erenberg of the Red Raiders picked up 212. Erenberg, who has rushed for 200 yards or more in his last four games, has 1,717 this year with one game to play. He needs just three yards to surpass the Division I-AA single-season record set by Frank Hawkins of Nevada-Reno in 1980.

WEST At UNLV the quarterback is Randall Cunningham, younger brother of Sam (Bum) At Cal State-Fullerton it's Damon Allen, younger brother of another former USC star, Marcus. Their teams were set to meet at Anaheim Stadium on Saturday, but late that morning stadium officials decided that after two days of heavy rain with no let-up in sight, the field would best be left alone. The Rebels and the Titans moved to a nearby high school field that had been torn up by a game the previous night. There were no dressing rooms or coaches' phones, but there was a bench-clearing brawl in the mud. A crowd of about 5,000, including Sam Cunningham and Marcus Allen on the sidelines, watched as the younger Cunningham completed nine of 11 passes and UNLV prevailed 13-10.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

OFFENSE: Ben Bennett completed 32 of 48 passes for 442 yards and three TDs to lead Duke over N.C. State 27-26. He is now 245 yards short of Jim McMahon's career passing record of 9,536 yards.

DEFENSE: In Northwestern (La.) State's 23-7 victory over Southeastern Louisiana, Safety Michael Richardson picked off a record-tying five passes, and he returned one of them 97 yards for a touchdown.

In the quasy Pac-10 (page 65), the only contest between Washington and the Rose Bowl is—was it was a year ago—Washington State. "I'm tickled to death," says Coach Jim Walden, whose Cougars upset the Huskies in their final regular-season game of 1982, thereby putting UCLA in the Rose Bowl, and last week beat Cal 16-6.

With five field goals in a 43-24 victory over Idaho, Tony Zendejas of Nevada-Reno became the NCAA career leader with 66. With an 81.5% success rate (66 of 81 field goal attempts) going into his final game this weekend, he has a chance to break the NCAA accuracy mark of 81.9% set by Chuck Nelson of Washington in 1980-82.

END

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by William Taaffe

Ever wonder what the British do on Sunday evenings in the fall? You won't believe it. It's 6:15, shortly after dark. The master of the house has long since driven Mum and the kiddies out to Surbiton to visit relatives. He has had his traditional dinner of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, and he has put on his slippers and patted the dog. Now he settles back to watch the latest installment of what the *Daily Mirror* calls a "bone-crushing form of unarmed combat practised by incredibly agile 20-stone [280-pound] hulks who can run like the wind and dress up like space warriors." It's time for some good old-fashioned NFL matches on the telly.

American Football, which amounts to a vigorously edited one-hour tape of the best NFL game played the previous week, has become something of a phenomenon on British TV since debuting last November on Channel 4, the new quasi-public network. Some 1.8 million viewers tune in each Sunday, and more than 4.5 million watched Channel 4's live, full-length telecast of the '83 Super Bowl, although the game didn't end in Britain until 2:30 a.m. The NFL often kills cricket on the telly and sometimes even beats soccer in the ratings. Granted, *American Football* doesn't face much competition on Sundays—6 to 7 p.m., traditionally set aside in Britain for religious programming, is known as the "God slot"—but 1.8 million viewers each week is no small piece of kidney pie.

You'd be surprised how much like *Star Wars* the NFL looks in Britain. Because the game is heavily edited—time-outs, huddles, penalties and incomplete passes wind up on the cutting-room floor—ordinary blokes in Derbyshire, say, probably think pro football is little else but spectacular catches in the end zone and outrageous player reactions. The Brits see lots of 40-yard "torpedoes" (their wonderfully apt term for a tightly spiraled pass); occasional "punchups" on the "pitch" (especially when the Raiders are playing); exceptionally jarring tackles and plenty of cheerleader razzmatazz. Some fans cheer Mark Gastineau's sack



As bobbies looked on in Hyde Park, the Ravens warmed up for that evening's TV game.

Scoring a hit with the Brits

Sunday night NFL games on the telly are a merrie olde smash in England

dances and the in-your-face spikes after touchdowns. Says Malcolm Phillips, a theater worker, "That's valuable tape. British soccer players jump up and kiss each other after they score."

The NFL also airs in such places as Japan, Italy and the Philippines, but it has made its biggest cultural splash in Britain. Last August, 32,847 curiosity seekers paid from \$8 to \$75 to attend a Vikings-Cardinals exhibition at London's Wembley Stadium. A ragtag amateur American football league with 17 teams has formed in Britain, and two members of England's hottest rock group, Culture Club, wear football uniforms.

So what is there about the NFL and Britain that has prompted 20,000 fans to write in for their very own Channel 4 *Idiot's Guide* to NFL rules and teams? Is it the hitting? My word, do the Brits talk about that. "To see those guys hitin' like that is superb!" says Steve Higgins, a civil engineer who plays cornerback for the London Ravens, a team in the amateur league. "They really do ta'e a knock. It's the old gladiator principle, isn't it?

Watch them kilin' each other. The crowd goes home satisfied."

Is it the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders, who are famous now in Britain? Ah, the understatement they do elicit. "They're pretty tasty," says TV director Andrew Croker. "You ought to go to a U.K. basketball game to see the difference."

Channel 4 buys the games, complete with the U.S. TV announcers' voices, for \$200,000 a year. But it uses two studio hosts as well, a 5' 11" English drc jockey named Nicky Horne and a 6' 7" former St. Bonaventure basketball player named Miles Aiken. Two Sundays ago Horne cted a delightful report that the gorillas and orangutans at Washington's National Zoo have begun watching Redskin games on the TV sets in their cages.

"Yeah, Nicky, but I don't think that will work here in London," said Aiken.

"Why not?" asked Horne.

"English apes are too conservative."

Well, maybe not all primates will get hooked on *American Football* in staid old Britain after all. But homo sapiens is on his way.

END



'ANY OF US MIGHT HAVE DONE IT'

That was the attitude among the Pitt football players on the night that Linebacker Todd Becker dropped from a third-story window when campus cops suddenly showed up at a party in a dorm from which he had been barred

BY RICK TELANDER



CONTINUED

TODD BECKER

continued



Becker feared he'd end up back home at the booting plant if he didn't make the press.

coroner's report would later determine the alcohol level in Becker's blood to be about 0.15%, 50% more than the accepted medical definition of drunkenness while driving.

It was Dec. 15, 1982, and the Pitt football team, with a 9-2 record and ranked No. 6 in the nation, was scheduled to leave for the Cotton Bowl the next day. Becker was a sophomore backup linebacker for the Panthers, a special teams demon who, says Coach Foge Fazio, "always just leveled his man." The occasion was a toga party, the kind of bacchanalian hoedown that Aristotle himself must have witnessed occasionally and which was immortalized for modern youth in *Animal House*. Because it was the last day of fall finals, the affair had a letting-off-steam air about it. "Just great friends and great times," recalls Pitt senior Defensive Tackle Bill Maas, who with his roommate, Dave Puzi, now a member of the Cleveland Browns, threw the bash in their sixth-floor Brackenridge suite.

Dorm parties had been banned during finals, but the spirit of this one was in keeping with the campus mood. "The streets and bars around school were crowded with students out having a good time," says Christina Clinton, editor of *The Pitt News*, the student newspaper, which had already printed its last issue of the year. "I was out drinking, too." In all probability, nothing unusual would have

The young are permanently in a state resembling intoxication; for youth is sweet and they are growing.

—ARISTOTLE

A lot of the revelers were still in their togas, but Todd Becker had taken his off and was back in street clothes. As he hung by his hands from a third-story window of Brackenridge Hall at the University of Pittsburgh, he seemed fearless. Yet it was fear that had driven him out the window in the first place. Certainly he was intoxicated. The

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LARRY WINBORG

happened at the party had dorm officials and campus police not arrived after midnight to check on a fire alarm that had gone off. "Somebody's always pulling a fire alarm," says Maas. But Becker was scared. He'd been burrowed from all Pitt dormitories for two years for squirting a fire extinguisher in his freshman dorm, and he knew that he'd be in trouble if school officials saw him now. He might well be suspended from the team, which would mean that his dream of playing in the Cotton Bowl would go unrealized.

"I told him, 'Listen, just go sit in my room and close the door and wait for everybody to come back,'" recalls Maas.

But Becker, who had sneaked into the dorm through a third-floor window in a friend's room, went back down to the third floor to try to get out the same way he'd come in. He banged on the friend's door but got no answer. A woman student across the hall heard the racket and, because she knew Becker, let him in to her room.

Becker went to her window, opened it and started to climb out. Both the woman and a male friend of Becker's—not a student—who had accompanied him to the party yelled that it was too far to jump. The window across the hall through which Becker had entered the dorm was almost at ground level, but because of Pittsburgh's hilly terrain this one was 35 feet above a cement walkway. Becker's friend grabbed his wrist, but Becker, who was now hanging by both hands, looked down and said he could make it. He pushed away from the window and dropped into the night.

"Todd was a happy-go-lucky kid,"



For Al, who's a trucker, and Virginia, the drive to Pittsburgh to see Todd's games was no problem.

says Maas, who insists, like others at the party, that Becker didn't seem drunk. "And really, any of us might have done it. It's something that we would laugh about later."

"He had no fear," says Fazio. "I'm sure he thought, 'This is easy for me. I can do this. I'll jump down and be practicing tomorrow.'"

He might have been, had he landed on his feet. Instead, he hit a protruding air conditioner, spun in midair and landed

on the pavement headfirst, suffering fatal brain damage. He died a short time later in the trauma center of Presbyterian-University Hospital. Fazio received a call at his home and rushed to the hospital, where he found a number of Panther football players and other students praying. He stared at Becker's body. "He had on one of his old game jerseys," says Fazio. "He had those big arms, and he just looked so alive."

From the hospital Fazio went to his off-

command

fice, where he met Athletic Director Ed Bozik. A former Air Force colonel, Bozik was stunned. "I've sent men into combat, and some of those men haven't come back," he says. "But this death was so unnecessary."

Perhaps this incident should be forgotten, written off as an aberration, an inexplicable college tragedy. But in its poignance it points to something deeper, something in youth itself. It also points to something in the fabric of big-time college football and to something in the atmosphere at Pitt, a school that boasts 93 years of proud football tradition, nine national championships and 57 All-Americans. Pitt is little different from the Oklahomas and Michigans, except that it resides in an NFL city where football is seen almost as a birthright of its citizens. And this matters.

"So much is expected of Pitt athletes," says Sports Information Director Jim O'Brien, who was born and raised in Pittsburgh and graduated from the school in 1964. "They aren't compared with other college players; they're compared with the Steelers. When a Pitt team plays a game, it's not just representing the university; it is representing the city of Pittsburgh, the City of Champions. Everything at this school is done under a magnifying glass."

Fazio shakes his head as he ponders Becker's fatal plunge. "There were so many events building up," he says. "So many things were bringing him closer to that window."

A lot of it had to do with pressure. Much of that was on Fazio himself. As a first-year coach Fazio, a former Pitt linebacker (class of '60) from nearby Coraopolis, was taking over a program that was so successful—the Panthers have more wins (71, including bowls) over the last seven years than any other Division I school—that he seemed more a cosmetic addition than a true leader. Pitt was most everybody's 1982 preseason pick for

No. 1. It seemed that all the big-hearted, fun-loving, local-boy-makes-good Fazio had to do was roll out the ball, and the talent brought in by former Coach Jackie Sherrill could whip the Steelers themselves. Indeed, three Pitt players, Dan Marino, Tim Lewis and Jimbo Covert, were selected in the first round of this year's NFL draft, and six others were picked in later rounds.

Just winning wasn't enough, however. People wanted roses, annihilations. "We



Coach Fazio has come down from his tower in order to get closer to his team.

were seven and oh and getting ripped," says Fazio. "We beat Syracuse 14-0, and everybody said, 'What's wrong with the offense?'" Unlike most major football schools, Pitt is situated in a major media market, and thus the team comes under the scrutiny of a sophisticated press. From the start, Fazio's players felt the heat from the media. "Even training camp was like the Democratic National Convention," says Fazio. "Maybe I should have kept it looser. I don't know. But we did not play loose."

"The press was so hostile that I always felt it was us against the world," recalls Joyce Aschenbrenner, the football sports information director at Pitt last year and

now the SID at UNLV. "I remember a column in a newspaper that referred to the 'well-oiled Pitt publicity machine.' I cut that out and put it in my wallet because it was so funny. People had no idea what we were going through. We were just hanging on for dear life."

In the beginning, Fazio stayed up in his observation tower, a la Bear Bryant, and surveyed his team darkly. Shortly before the start of preseason practice he learned that his wife, Norma, had cancer.

"They operated on her on picture day," says Fazio. "I remember that." Norma was in and out of Presbyterian Hospital for more than a month, and suddenly her husband's world became very small. "We live three blocks from this office," says Fazio, leaning over his desk at the stadium and pointing out the window. "And the hospital's right across the street. To be honest, I was so busy with football and getting our two kids off to school and going over there that I don't know what I thought."

Fazio does know that the pressure on his players was "unbelievable." Money brought on part of it. As is the case at most big schools, Pitt's football program more or less subsidizes the university's entire athletic department. The team had better generate a given amount of TV and bowl-game income by season's end, or all hell can break loose. "What it means is that this is big business," says Bozik. "and that some 18- or 19-year-old is going to drop or catch a pass that will cost or make you a million dollars."

Also, for many of the players, getting drafted by the pros was a constant concern. Becker had plenty of time to make his mark, but he wasn't starting, and that frightened him. The ghosts of Panther stars past measured him daily. Just inside the Pitt locker room door, Tony Dorsett's Heisman Trophy glints dully. The retired lockers of Dorsett, Marino and Hugh Green, sealed over with Plexiglas and marked with metal plaques, remain in

continued



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TODD BECKER

continued

place and speak silently, almost mystically, of greatness. Becker's deepest fear focused on a bottling plant near his hometown in Fitchburg, Mass. "He always said he'd end up back at the plant if he didn't make it to the pros," said teammate Chris Warman the day after Becker died.

Then there were the fans. In Pittsburgh they're tough and knowledgeable and spoiled by years of Steeler and Panther success. "They think nothing of booing a player who's not a pro, not even a man yet," says John Pelusi, the center on Pitt's 1976 national championship team and now a local financial consultant. The fans got on All-America quarterback Marino so mercilessly for having a subpar senior season that even Joe Paterno, coach of archrival Penn State, was moved to tell a Pittsburgh reporter in early December. "I think we got to get rid of that junk."

Pitt has no athletic dorms and few special rules for athletes. Nothing insulates the players from the commotion around them. The campus consists of a number of high-rises near Forbes Avenue at the eastern end of the city, just below the Hill District's ghetto. Bars, night spots and liquor stores dot the area, and drinking is almost de rigueur for students. In fact, there's a bar less than a hundred yards from where Becker fell. The urban setting is both the beauty and the blemish of the school. "It takes a special kind of kid to go to Pitt," says Aschenbrenner. "It's not Happy Valley U., with a quaint little campus. But it's always exciting. Just stand on Forbes Avenue for 45 minutes and see how many fire trucks and police cars go by."

O'Brien recalls that when he was a freshman at Pitt in 1960, a Panther football player was stabbed in a city bar. O'Brien also remembers celebrating his

21st birthday, the first day he could legally drink, in a tavern where he and his pals had already been drinking for two years. "You're not in an incubator at Pitt," says O'Brien. "This school prepares you for the real world." Last year, perhaps, Pitt's football players could have used a buffer zone, an area where they could have rest-

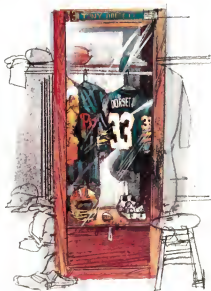
problem was so natural it defied resolution. The players felt rootless—"There was always the question, 'Whose team is it. Sherrill's or Fazio's?'" says Bonk—and they were unable to rally as a group. They were simply too young. Senior Wide Receiver Dwight Collins claims that pressure isn't a problem for him now that he's married. The commitment, says Collins, gives him "discipline and order." But he quickly adds, "Other guys may not have it."

Order is not a natural gift of youth, particularly not of young football players. In this context order doesn't mean the drive to work or the willingness to make sacrifices for a larger goal; football players have that to an extreme. What is meant is the order one obtains from having priorities set, from being at peace, from knowing the difference between a violent game and a society that frowns on violence, from knowing, as Bezik says, "when to turn it on and when to turn it off."

Becker was still learning when to turn it on and off. The Panthers' 1982 media guide says the 6' 2", 214-pounder's favorite pastime was lifting weights. "He was such a good football player," says his father, Al, a trucker. "He was a killer." But the same aggressiveness that delighted every coach Becker ever had

was a problem off the field. On his left calf Becker bore a tattoo of a grinning Sylvester the Cat hanging Twenty bird by the neck with a piece of rope. It was a violent tattoo, and Becker sometimes seemed violent himself. "He sort of scared you at first, because you couldn't tell what he was going to do," says John Canto, a junior defensive back who was a friend of Becker's from Massachusetts. "But he wasn't a brute. He cared for the people around him. And he loved kids. But he was kind of . . . wild. I

continued



Pittsburgh doesn't retire just jerseys; it retires whole lockers.

ed and been debriefed before leaving their world up on the hill at Pitt Stadium and entering the one below.

By late November, dissension had begun to plague the team. Pitt had lost two of its last three games and everyone was dumbfounded. Lewis, who's now with the Green Bay Packers, publicly blasted some of his teammates for not giving their all. Eventually, Associate Athletic Director Dean Billick called a press conference just so Lewis and others could explain their statements. But the biggest



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TODD BECKER

continued

remember my dad saying to me, 'You can only cross that white line so many times.' And I'd think, 'Todd's crossing it again. What's going to happen to him? Something is.'"

Bozick has often thought about the dilemma of youthful exuberance, in both sport and war. "Football training is very much analogous to military training," he says. "In both cases young men are trained to do things they instinctively would not do. This has to condition your psyche, but the question is, can you convert that training and use its positive elements in normal life? In the military we have what we call 'war lovers,' the ones who can't turn it off. But everyone is constantly trained to act like gentlemen when not in a battle situation."

"Basically, I believe in the Aristotelian philosophy of striking a median, a balance. Any characteristic taken to an extreme becomes a vice. After all, getting into trouble, doing stupid things—that's not really the province of football players. It's traditional for young people to get into trouble."

But football players tend to be wilder than other students. At Pitt this is particularly true of defensive players. In a primitive way Panther defenders have always seemed to represent those Pittsburghers who would love just once to strike out from their dreary jobs—or joblessness—and tear into the big guys. "People here love to see Pittsburgh teams beat the hell out of teams from prettier places," says O'Brien.

Last February, Puzzuoli, who played defensive tackle for the Panthers, and Dennis Atiyeh, a linebacker, got into a fight with eight Pittsburgh police officers outside a bar. Puzzuoli and Atiyeh were beaten so badly that, according to Aschenbrenner, who took photos at the police station, Puzzuoli's "underwear was covered with blood," and both players were cut and bleeding from dog bites. The police took a beating, too; seven of the eight were injured.



The Panthers wore Todd's number in Dallas.



Moss says that Becker didn't seem drunk at the party.

One has testified that he started to go for his gun because Atiyeh "threatened to kill me with my own nightstick," and that Atiyeh "seemed to be highly intoxicated." Many questions remain unanswered about the brouhaha, but a number of people think the players were the victims of police "overreaction."

Fazio was the defensive coordinator at Pitt before getting the head position, and he thinks the Panthers' current defensive zeal started when Green enrolled in 1977. A three-time All-America defensive end now with Tampa Bay, Green brought a spirited abandon not only to games but to practices as well. "Hugh's enthusiasm spread," says Fazio. "At times, practices were hilarious." At other times, they were like wars. A couple of Pitt players who hunted during off-days began to give bear screams during practice. At night they'd lean out their dorm windows and scream "Aaargh!" into the city. Then they did it in games. The Panther defense, ranked among the Top 5 in the country each of the last four years, terrified opponents. "Todd picked it up," says Fazio. "He fit in. He loved to hit."

Through the years several Pitt gridiron stars, including Paul Martha, Mike Ditka and Dorsett, have gotten into ugly scrapes either with the law or with university officials. Fazio himself says he's lucky to have made it out of high school without ending up "dead or incarcerated." Pelusi got into a street fight while at Pitt and was arrested along with two teammates. After a 4½-day trial, the three were cleared of all charges.

Today, at 28, Pelusi is a successful businessman. The club he's sitting in at Oxford Centre in downtown Pittsburgh is part of the \$100 million building his firm financed. Pelusi looks back on the incident as an unfortunate but perhaps necessary stepping-stone to adulthood. "Look around," he says, gesturing at the sedate luncheon crowd. "These are some of the city's biggest business people, and I bet not one isn't embarrassed by something he did in the past."

continued

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TODD BECKER

continued

The problem, of course, is surviving the growth process. "People expect Pitt football players to be big shots not only on the field, but off it," says Clinton of *The Pitt News*. "They have to be the biggest partiers, the biggest drinkers, the wild ones. And they're only human." Maas, an All-America and certain first-round NFL pick next spring, has started to realize this. "You'll be doing great in games for a couple of weeks," he says, "and then all of a sudden you'll take a hard one to the chin and you stop and think, 'I'm not immortal.'"

That such news should have to be learned at all is almost ludicrous. But the myopia of youth may well be a vital characteristic, a trait that helps keep our species on its toes, that keeps us striving against great and even foolish odds. If nothing else, it's one reason the Army drafts 18-year-olds and not contented middle-aged executives.

In October 1982 David Packer, a freshman wide receiver at the University of Rhode Island, apparently fell from a fourth-floor window of a campus dorm and suffered such severe brain trauma that he was not expected to live. He did, however, and though he'll probably never play football again, he may be able to re-enroll at Rhode Island next fall. No one, not even Packer, who has a 20-minute memory gap leading up to the accident, knows exactly what happened. He was probably just carrying out a crazy prank.

Last Friday at 4:15 a.m., Andrew Radcliff, the starting goalkeeper for the Hofstra University soccer team, was critically injured when he fell five stories from a dormitory window. Radcliff landed on his head and suffered multiple skull fractures as well as broken arms and legs and internal injuries. Radcliff had been drinking beer when he and a friend went to the room to visit two female students. Radcliff was sitting on the window ledge, lost his balance and fell.

What disturbs Rod Crafts, Rhode Island's dean of student life, is the way students invariably react to tragedies like

Packer's and Radcliff's. "It's one of my duties to counsel close friends of victims," says Crafts. "And the common thread is always there: College students do not see themselves as vulnerable. They often say, 'I thought death was for my grandparents, not for me.'"

But for Becker's parents, death is something that can happen to the young. "I think about him every day, all the time," says Al Becker. "He was my dream. Now I can hardly watch football at all."

In the beginning the Beckers, who have two other sons, were excited about Todd going to Pitt. "We were the proud-

senior year at Fitchburg High he broke the school record for tackles and led the team in rushing. I drive a trailer truck, and I'm unfamiliar with college life, but did they have to ban him from the dorms for two years? He didn't do anything malicious. He was a tough kid, but he had feelings. Maybe they punished him because he wasn't a starter."

"I'm glad he went to Pitt, because he wanted to," says Todd's mother, Virginia. "But now I'm just filled with what-ifs." One of those is what if Todd had gone to UCLA, which had recruited him but wanted him to spend two years at a California junior college before joining the Bruins. But as Al says, "My wife's never been out there." Besides, Al continues, his driving experience made it "nothing for us to drive to Pittsburgh and see all Todd's games."

The Pitt team delayed its trip to the Cotton Bowl for a day to attend a memorial service on campus for Todd. Fazio, Bazik, part-time Assistant Coach Jim Miceli and several players, including Maas, Puzzioli and Calito, later flew from Dallas to Fitchburg for the funeral. In the game against SMU, the Panthers wore patches on their jerseys bearing Becker's number, 38. The school flew his parents to Dallas and promised their youngest son, Jason, now 14 and a 170-pound linebacker at Fitchburg High, a scholarship to Pitt.

Virginia is ambivalent about the offer. "The athletic department was very good to us," she says. "But the school itself never sent us one line of condolence. It's almost as though my son wasn't even a student. I wonder if anybody is even thinking about him there."

Fazio is—all the time. Indeed, Fazio has changed not only because of Becker's death but also because of everything he and his team went through last season. He has come down out of his tower to get closer to his players, and he has tried to institute new codes of discipline. Players can no longer wear caps at the training table. They can't put their helmets on the ground during practice. They must wear



Pitt has promised a scholarship to Todd's brother Jason.

est people in Fitchburg," says Al. "Nobody around here ever goes to a big school." But like the parents of any heavily recruited athlete, they knew their child would face disappointments if things didn't work out.

"My wife was just mentioning that it could've had a large effect on Todd that he wasn't first team, that he could've been hurt inside," says Al. "From 10th grade on he never sat on the bench. His

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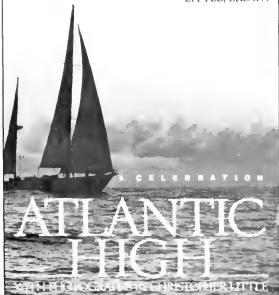
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TODD BECKER

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coats and ties to both home and away games. Further, at the start of the year Fazio hired 38-year-old Carmen Grosso, a former Green Beret who saw action in Vietnam, to serve as a combination tight end coach and low-key disciplinarian.

Fazio knows there's a paradox in such measures. As he told the *Pittsburgh Press* last August, "We don't want them to be the best-behaved, best-dressed, most clean-shaven—and be the worst football players." Fazio still exhorts his defensive players to be "wild and reckless and fearless" ahead. He still laughs at their antics, and he screams at them when they mess up. Most of all, he just wants them to make it through this tough period in their lives performing their best, unscathed.

"Todd's death had a sobering effect," says Fazio. "I learned that you have to keep things in the proper perspective. You're trying to mold these kids, but you also know you can't change their personalities. You hope that they learn to do things the right way, that they learn to walk away from the bad things. . . . Fazio, who openly marvels that he, the son of immigrants, is now the football coach at this proud school, pauses. On his office wall is a 2½' × 3' photo of the '63 Panther team, which went 9-1, losing only to Navy. Fazio didn't play on that squad, and he didn't coach it. The picture is there because he likes what the team accomplished after its victories. Of the 61 players on the roster, 57 graduated and 34 went on to obtain advanced degrees, to become doctors, dentists, engineers, lawyers, coaches, teachers, businessmen—successes. The boys grew up.

Fazio thinks once more of Becker. He looks at his desk top. "You can't go half speed in football, or you'll get hurt," he says. His voice then drifts off and he shakes his head. "If only I'd been there that night. . . ."

"The imagination of a boy is healthy," wrote John Keats, who died of tuberculosis at 26, partly because he didn't believe the disease would kill him, "and the mature imagination of a man is healthy, but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thickskirted." It's a pity Todd Becker didn't make it past that ferment of the soul, into adulthood. **END**

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PERSPECTIVE

by MICHAEL BAUGHMAN

SAVE THE POND, THIS OUTDOORSMAN BELIEVES, AND YOU'LL SAVE ITS DUCKS

There are two kinds of efforts commonly made to save wildlife these days. The first are attempts, often spectacular, at rescuing and rehabilitating individual birds and animals. The second are habitat restoration projects quietly undertaken—with little fanfare or media coverage—by outdoor clubs and environmental organizations.

Here are a few recent and typical examples from the first category:

- Dr. Lance Olson, a Spokane ophthalmologist, headed a team of veterinarians and technicians who tried to transplant a cornea from a badly injured eagle to the eye of a 3-year-old golden eagle. The dramatic scene was complete with crowds of reporters as well as a closed circuit television system to record the operation and give spectators a clear view. ("I felt very uncomfortable about it," says Olson with regard to the media attention.) Unfortunately, the eagle's eye had been damaged beyond repair, so the attempt had to be abandoned.
- A Laysan albatross with sheared wings and tail feathers was found wandering the streets of San Francisco. At the International Bird Rescue Center in nearby Berkeley, a pair of rehabilitation specialists took carefully measured feathers from a dead albatross and inserted them into the shafts of the living bird. It was then flown by airplane 5,000 miles to Midway Island—where albatrosses winter—and released.
- While visiting Florida's Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary with his wife, Eloise, in 1972, actor Pat O'Brien (who died in October) noticed a badly injured pelican. The bird's left eye had been snagged by a fish hook, and its right wing had apparently been severed by the plastic fishing line as it tried to free itself. O'Brien offered to pay for any care needed to save the bird. Doctors named the pelican after the actor and performed three delicate operations. Pelican Pat, though partially blind, survived.
- A couple of years ago Donna the Duck

was featured on a number of network newscasts. Donna was a mallard hen living at the Sahara Country Club in Las Vegas, where a teen-age boy shot her through the chest with a target arrow. Rescuers succeeded in dragging her and then flew her by helicopter to a vet, who surgically removed the arrow, administered antibiotics and pronounced the bird on the road to recovery and a normal life. In an interview, a spokesman for the Nevada Humane Society said that the duck's case was a good thing in one way—it "made people aware of the plight of wildlife in the world today."

It's difficult to argue against the reporting of humane behavior. But it seems



to me that media coverage of these dramatic efforts actually may serve to do more harm than good by obscuring the real dilemma facing wildlife—habitat destruction and deterioration.

A cornea transplant performed on a single eagle does nothing to explain or rectify the plight of eagles. Flying an albatross from California to Midway Island can be viewed as a costly way of ignoring the difficulties seabirds have surviving on our nation's polluted coastlines. While the recovery of Pelican Pat is a happy event, the real story is that 85% of the pelicans in that area are injured yearly by unintended fishing lines and hooks.

As for the quietly undertaken projects

that seldom make news but that usually make sense, I think one typical example will suffice in proving their effectiveness:

- Ten years ago, as a member of an Oregon fishing club called the Steamboaters, I was involved in a stream rehabilitation program on Cedar Creek, a tributary of Steamboat Creek, which is in turn a major tributary of the North Umpqua River. Portions of Cedar Creek had been badly overlogged. When trees are cut down along a stream's banks, the resulting loss of shade causes a rise in summer water temperatures. This can be disastrous to salmon, steelhead and trout. When too many trees are taken from mountain-sides, heavy rains and spring snowmelt wash tons of earth down barren slopes, silting the gravel spawning beds that ensure the survival of anadromous fish.

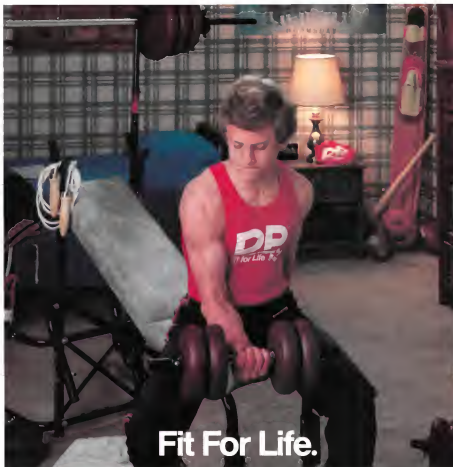
There were 35 or 40 of us involved in the project, and over a period of two months we planted thousands of alder trees and Douglas firs along the banks of Cedar Creek and on the adjacent slopes. We also built several gabions, which are small dams made of stones enclosed in wire fencing. High winter water washes gravel in behind the gabions, creating new spawning beds.

Last August I went back to visit Cedar Creek. The trees we planted are now tall enough to shade the water through the heat of summer days, and hundreds of yards of spawning gravel have filled in behind the gabions. Most encouraging of all, there were steelhead smolts in every pool in the creek, proof that adult fish have been spawning successfully.

There was nothing spectacular or even difficult about the work done by the Steamboaters at Cedar Creek. Hundreds of hunting, fishing and conservation organizations across the country undertake similar projects each year. But because their results sometimes take a decade or more to unfold, such undertakings don't readily lend themselves to media coverage.

Saving individual wild creatures often requires great effort and expense, and the practice speaks well for human impulses. But the heartwarming outcomes of such attempts often obscure the unarguable fact that habitat restoration is the more important undertaking, the enormous job that really matters to wildlife and to those of us who love it.

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On The Scene

by RICHARD PHELAN

THE LITTLE CRITTERS LEAVING DEVIL'S SINKHOLE ARE LIKE BATS OUT OF HELL

Two climbers are known to have been killed exploring the Devil's Sinkhole in western Texas, and perhaps 2,000 others have got in and out of it safely in the century since the white man discovered it. Attempts at exploitation—extracting guano, lowering sightseers into the gloom—have failed. The sinkhole, with its small subterranean mountain, its immense bat colony and its crystalline lakes, remains pretty much an underground wilderness. It seems to resist human meddling, partly by being unpleasant. It fascinates many people, but it smells of bats. It's mysterious, offering the possibility of discovering fantastic caverns no man has ever seen, but looking for them is dangerous.

The Devil's Sinkhole is roughly the shape of a funnel turned upside down, with the little end at the surface of the earth. The narrow part of the funnel is technically the sinkhole, and it leads down to the big room called the cavern. The sinkhole is in a rocky pasture, on a ranch 10 miles east of Rocksprings, Texas, in a region of the state known as the Edwards Plateau.

There's a hole in the ground 60 feet across and 140 feet deep. At the bottom, where direct sunlight never reaches, is a jumble of rocks. But it isn't really the bottom; it's the point where the funnel begins to grow wider. The rocks are the summit of the mountain—formed by a geological process that has been dissolving limestone from the upper walls over thousands of years—that fills much of the big room below. When people descend by rope or cable they come to rest on this rock pile and then must scramble 160 feet down its slopes to reach the base.

The room in which they find themselves is 240 feet wide, 360 feet long and irregular in shape. It's wide at the bottom and narrow at the top. Enough daylight comes down through the sink to allow one to get around without a flashlight. But getting around isn't easy. The rocks are loose—they range from automobile size to mere chips—and many are covered with a foot of guano. In summer,

millions of bats cling overhead on parts of the ceiling not covered by stalactites. In winter, they migrate to Mexico and South America.

At various points around the perimeter of the room are pools of water. They are called lakes, though some of them are no bigger than a living room and only three or four feet deep. The pools are so motionless that all suspended matter settles to the bottom, and the water is as clear as air. People step into the ponds not realizing that there's water there.

The biggest lake is about 20 feet by 70 feet and has a small room to itself, the Lake Room. You reach it—and here you'll need a flashlight—through a tunnel or passageway in the rocks, and when you come to the water's edge you are 310 feet underground, as deep as you can go in the sinkhole without putting on scuba gear. By flashlight you can examine stalactites on the ceiling of the Lake Room and the vast boulders in the depths of the water. Some people go swimming, but only briefly because the water is cold.

Scuba diving is dangerous in the lakes because of crevices and unknown passageways and is best left to the experienced, the well-equipped and the very careful. When they plunge beneath the surface of a lake, the divers hope to find an underwater passage, follow it and emerge in a new room or perhaps on the

bank of an underground river. So far this hasn't happened. But it could, because beneath the Edwards Plateau lies one of the great cave regions of the world. There are fissures and caverns and springs by the thousand, the suspicion is that because of their inaccessibility, most of the geological phenomena are undiscovered. Many Texas cities have speleological clubs and many universities have biologists who explore and map the reachable parts of this underworld to study the animals that live in it.

The plateau is a limestone slab about the size of West Virginia. On the surface it's almost entirely ranch country—thin-soiled and dry, with scrubby trees, good grass and prickly pear. The water is underground. When a rancher drills a well and finds that for decades he can pump out all the water he and his livestock need, whether it rains on the surface or not, he assumes he has tapped an underground river. These rivers come to the surface in the form of springs along the southern edge of the plateau, where they supply cities and industries and military bases with water. The biggest of these rivers, the Comal, produces 200 million gallons a day.

A man named Clarence Whitworth bought the Devil's Sinkhole Ranch in 1927, when he was 27. In 1934 he married Katherine Nicholson, a young wom-

ILLUSTRATION BY CHARTER BLANKINSHIP



an from the cotton country of central Texas. They raised cattle, sheep and goats in the rocky, silent pastures until Clarence's death in 1981. Katherine still owns the ranch. It's not a particularly large one for that part of the world—six sections. A section is a piece of land a mile square. Much of West Texas is still owned, fenced and ranched in these huge squares, there having been no occasion as yet to subdivide them.

In the days of the open range, a herd of stampeding Longhorns might easily have been swallowed up by the Devil's Sinkhole. But it was far from the major cattle trails, and this never happened. No fence is needed now to keep the pasture's livestock from falling in. "You can't get a horse within a hundred yards," Clarence once told me. "Cattle, ether Goats, they'll graze a little closer." Katherine believes that all the animals in the pasture, cougars and skunks and jackrabbits as well as livestock, sense danger in the smell of guano and keep away.

Still, she says, the sinkhole did have a fence around it once, back in the 1930s. The Rocksprings Chamber of Commerce put it there, hoping to charge admission and lower tourists into the hole. Business was slow, and one day some local teenage boys ripped the fence off its posts. It was wire mesh. They hung it in the sinkhole as a sort of ladder and climbed down it to explore the cavern. This was a perfect setup for a fatal accident, but none occurred. The sinkhole's fatalities were other young people—a Boy Scout and an 18-year-old woman—who were killed, in separate accidents during the last 30 years, in explorations far more orderly and careful than that of the Rocksprings high school boys.

Since pioneer times, people have looked in in big tumorlike blobs on the walls of the sink and wondered how to get at them. They contain gallions and gallions of honey and aren't easily stolen by man. Cowboys used to shoot at them and glumly watch the honey drip into the hole. Modern cavers seem more interested in exploring—and in avoiding stings.

Honey, bat droppings and crystal-clear lakes make an odd combination, but caves are full of biological and geological curiosities. The Devil's Sinkhole contains crickets, beetles, mites, pseudoscorpions and spiders, and a live diamondback rattlesnake was once found on the mountain. If a baby bat falls from the ceiling, it is quickly consumed by the arthropods

continued

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Q: What if you're tackled hard, Cris?

A: "They haven't popped out yet and I've been dumped a lot of times. What's more: Unlike glasses, I don't have to worry about them slipping off or fogging up."

Q: How long can you wear them?

A: "I wear them playing ball, when I'm out on dates, just about everywhere. And every waking minute. I don't like hiding my face behind glasses."

Q: Aren't they uncomfortable?

A: "They're so easy to wear, I can't tell I've got them on. Bausch & Lomb has a special process that tapers them and makes them incredibly thin. Even eye care professionals rank them number one for comfort."

Q: How often do you clean them?

A: "Once a day. They're no more bother than brushing my teeth."

Q: Aren't they expensive?

A: "They'd be worth it if they cost twice as much. But the truth is you'll be surprised at how inexpensive they are. Lots less than some designer glasses."

Q: I've heard about new lenses, have you?

A: "Yes, Bausch & Lomb now makes soft contacts for people with astigmatism and for people who need bifocals. And if you're nearsighted, they've just introduced the 30 DAY LENS. You can wear them up to 30 days without removing."

Q: How do I find out if soft contacts are right for me?

A: "See your eye care professional. Most offer trial fittings. And ask for Bausch & Lomb contacts...the most prescribed soft contacts in the world."

ON THE SCENE continued

that wriggle by the million in the guano below.

The sink contains creatures more appealing than those in the big room. Horned owls nest on ledges, terns and towhees pick over mosses and lichens as much as 100 feet down. Lucky visitors get to hear the remarkably pure song of the canyon wren, which nests in crevices and forages on the walls.

Some bird watchers come specifically to add cave swallows to their life list. These birds migrate to Texas in the spring and nest in 16 caves and sinkholes on the Edwards Plateau. You can see them there, and in a certain corner of New Mexico, and nowhere else in the U.S. At the Devil's Sinkhole they stack their mud nests on the ceiling of the big room, in areas unoccupied by the bats.

We don't know what the Indians thought of the cave. In this part of the country they were Comanches. Plains Indians who felt uneasy even in open woods. Nor do we know when a white man first saw it. Folklore sets the date at 1867, when the sinkhole lay well beyond the frontier. The first verifiable visitor, Aron Billings, was herding 400 hogs when he came upon the sinkhole in 1876, no one had told him it was there. The earliest date carved in the big room says H.S. BARKER, OCT. 19, 1889. Early explorers went down on flimsy ladders wired to shrubs that grew in the rock. The walls of the sink are never truly vertical. They lean in and out and in places offer ledges and footholds for the daring.

Technology has changed rock climbing. Today's cavers use gadgets like rappel racks and brake bars that make getting up and down ropes and in and out of sinkholes fairly simple. Another school, that of the internal-combustion outdoorsmen, merely drives a truck to the rim, extends a boom over the abyss and lowers people by means of a winch.

The sinkhole's chillest and most unpredictable act is its bat flight. This may or may not take place on the day you go to see it. I tried three times in different years and saw only a few hundred bats come out. A fourth visit was more than satisfactory; it was stunning. Bats are difficult to count but I must have seen millions that day.

Around sundown, two owls and a hawk flew up and lit in the tops of stunted live oaks south of the hole. Cows and calves were howling half a mile away, a rather pleasant sound at that distance.

The cave swallows did a few acrobatics over the hole and dived in for the night.

The stream of bats began thinly, but within five minutes they were pouring out of the sinkhole like black smoke from an industrial stack 60 feet in diameter. Each bat had only enough space to flap its wings in, and together they made a muted, fluttering roar. It seemed marvelous that the principles of flight could work in air that was taking such a beating. The smell of guano was drawn up and out of the hole and became thick and sickening. The strand of bats stretched southward through the air for half a mile. Then it frayed as the bats went different ways for the night.

The sun set, the twilight faded, some stars came out and still the flow went on. After a while it began to seem unnatural, uncanny. An hour and 20 minutes passed before a flashlight aimed into the hole showed that the supply was dwindling. It's probably the best light that has convinced so many people that undiscovered caverns and tunnels connect with the Devil's Sinkhole. It seems impossible for the one known room to hold them all.

But with its wings folded, a Mexican free-tailed bat, whose wingspread is 12 inches, is only about the size of your thumb. And the bats cling to each other in roosting, making a living blanket several inches deep, attached to the ceiling by the claws of the innermost layer. Because they weigh only a third of an ounce each, the bats can do this easily.

Some people find the sinkhole less than attractive. "A great festering sore in the skin of the earth," said a feature writer in the *Houston Chronicle*. The Department of the Interior rejected the sinkhole years ago as a possible national park, and Texas officials haven't wanted it for the state system, either.

It appeals primarily to scientists, to cavers and others who find beauty not only in scenery and sunsets but also in the workings of nature, her curious ways of doing things. Promoters have dreamed of subterranean boat rides, of big plastic tubes through which people could walk, looking out at an underwater underworld, floodlit and strange. The necessary passageways have not been discovered, and the guano remains a problem in attracting a large public devoted to deodorants and mouthwash. The Devil's Sinkhole remains basically unchanged. Its best explorers so far are the bees, bats, swallows and owls.

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Reminiscence

by HARRY MIDDLETON

ON THANKSGIVING, A HUNTER GIVES HIS PREY GOOD REASON TO BE THANKFUL

The morning was cold, and as Aubrey walked from his house he pulled his gray coat up about his neck, lit a cigarette and put his thermos and .308 rifle on the front seat of his pickup truck. A thick fog hung low over Silk Stocking Road, so Aubrey put his brown 1968 Ford truck into low gear and drove cautiously toward town. From somewhere down the rail line to Meridian a diesel train horn sounded, filling the chilly November morning with its booming noise. The sound pleased Aubrey. It reminded him of his youth and the long winter days spent in the pine woods. No matter how far back into the Mississippi hills a man went, he could still hear the trains moving across the land, especially on clear winter nights, a cold moon rising.

Aubrey stopped in at the café across from Callahan's Tire Service for a cup of coffee, hot biscuits and grits. The coffee was steaming and thick and felt good, like an extra layer of clothing. Aubrey ate and drank slowly, paying little attention to Pat MacLaurin, who was seated at the counter talking to two hunters from Meridian. MacLaurin was telling them about the big 12-point buck he had taken in the open soybean field near the old Hamner place outside Lauderdale back in 1978. His deer grew in size and took on more points each time he told the story.

Aubrey had been there on the late fall morning when MacLaurin's deer and two does moved from the wood's edge into the field to feed. He and MacLaurin had sat most of the night across the field in a thicket of Virginia creeper and scrub oak, wrapped in green wool blankets, hugging the cold, damp earth, waiting for that first rustle of leaf and brush, the sound of moving deer.

Two yearlings had stepped into the bright December moonlight, eating their fill of the season's last greenery and

drinking from old tractor ruts. They were small and young, full of next year's promise—or that of the year after—and the two men stretched out in the thicket hunted them only with their eyes. Seeing them eased the hunters' fatigue and hunger.

At daybreak the big buck approached with his does. The buck was the soft brown color of a hawk's breast. He sniffed every scent on the wind, every scent on the earth. He took note of the earlier presence of the younger deer and snorted loudly. As the first of the morning's sunlight filtered through the pines behind them, the deer walked carefully into the brown stubble of the bean field. The does fed hungrily as the buck



watched every detail of their movement.

The buck turned quickly at the sound of water—actually, drops of dew rolling from the leaves of the oaks and splashing onto the thick carpet of leaves and pine needles. Field mice rushed about in the bean field, and the buck thrust his head higher to see them, moving closer to the feeding does. The sun rose behind him, and he presented a massive silhouette, head erect, every muscle taut.

MacLaurin took his Browning rifle from beneath his wool blanket, quietly worked the dark, blue barrel through the vines and limbs in front of him and slipped off the safety. There was a long

moment of silence, as if the whole Mississippi countryside was, like MacLaurin, holding its breath. No grass moved in the wind; no birds sang. The shot hardly disturbed the new morning. Its sound was quickly soaked up by the wide expanse of open field and the sudden stretch of thick woods. MacLaurin's reputation as a good man with a rifle had been well earned. At the instant MacLaurin squeezed the Browning's trigger, the buck turned his head slightly toward the hunters. That movement stopped as he fell in the bean field, his head facing the woods' edge, a trickle of blood at the corner of his mouth. Frightened and confused, the does ran first directly across the field toward the old Hamner house, stopped

abruptly, jerked sideways and then hurriedly worked their way back to where the buck lay. One of the does stopped, sniffed about the buck's body and quickly followed her companion into the safety of the woods.

This was a fine deer—weighing more than 200 pounds with an eight-point rack. He was handsome, powerful, an animal to envy and respect. In the four years since, though, MacLaurin had turned the buck into one of the most famous deer of Lauderdale County, a 300-pound rogue with a massive 12-point rack. Whenever MacLaurin spoke of the deer, told youngsters and hunters about him, Aubrey said nothing and smiled as broadly as MacLaurin, because Aubrey also liked seeing the gleam in the young men's eyes and hearing in their voices the old hunger he still felt for the deep, winter woods and the delight and mystery of deer feeding along dark streams where few men went anymore.

Aubrey finished his coffee, put a quarter on the shiny tabletop and before MacLaurin finished telling his story, left. He, after all, knew how the story ended. MacLaurin would tell the men how he sat with the buck's body for a long time, till the December sun had risen fully, then carried the deer to the bank of Possum Creek and cut his muscular throat, letting the buck's rich, dark blood soak the earth it had loved best. MacLaurin, Aubrey had to admit, had a way with a story.

Outside the café a cold rain had begun

continued

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to fall. Aubrey drove carefully to his used-furniture store, which sat on the small ridge where the town officially ended and the woods began. He unlocked and opened the large double tin doors, flipped on the lights, set his rifle behind his wooden desk, admired for a moment his reframing of the old barn with new 20-foot joints of oak beam and quickly went to work. He loved the rich smell inside the store, that heady mix of old maple and ash, oak and cherry, mulhogan and pine. Today there were Mrs. Quinton's old armchairs to repair, 12 cane chairs from Mount Harmon to strip, stain and varnish, and an old hicksaw to sharpen. Aubrey lit a fire in the black wood stove at the store's center, and as the seasoned white oak caught the flame, he felt warm and good. The day went well, and quickly he sold a washstand to a couple from New Jersey for \$50. At dinnertime he warmed up a plate of squirrel steak and gravy, field peas and biscuits and washed that down with a water glass of Brady Harper's liquor. Aubrey had gotten the liquor from Harper's house in town, picking it up, as always, at dawn. Aubrey

bought a one-gallon plastic milk container of the liquor every month for \$15. He cut the whiskey with water and drank it slowly. It warmed him evenly, like a good fire.

By early evening, the cold rain stopped and the skies cleared. In the hazy, soft November sunlight the Mississippi hills looked blue and ancient. Aubrey took the .308 from behind his desk, settled down in a wooden rocker and began rubbing the rifle's barrel with a rag that smelled of dark oil. Behind the store, in the thick underbrush that Aubrey had not cleared out for years, a snipe whistled in the thickening twilight. At precisely six o'clock Aubrey got up from his chair, closed the twin doors and locked them from the inside. The large red *OPEN* sign hanging from the store's front window latch was reversed to read *CLOSED*.

The moon had fully risen by seven o'clock and was a milky white behind the thin clouds racing quickly to the north-east. Aubrey flipped off the store's outdoor lights and all of the inside lights except the single bulb above his desk. Here he sat for a time in a small pool of light

rubbing oil into the stock of the .308 and sipping Harper's fine whiskey. Now that the sun had gone down the liquor warmed him more than ever, and Aubrey closed his eyes and slept alone in the old furniture store at the foot of the blue Mississippi hills. Barred owls barked loudly while a gray fox sniffed at the store's back door looking for leftovers, just as he did every night. Raccoons saddled down the trunks of oaks and sycamores eager to reach town for an easy meal.

Aubrey awoke before midnight. He rubbed his eyes and pulled on his coat, for the fire in the wood stove had gone out and the store was now cold and dark. Taking up his rifle, he walked to the back of the store where he had made a makeshift ladder out of old boards, each nailed securely to an oak beam that ran up next to the old barn hayloft. Aubrey worked steadily, methodically, taking flashlight, binoculars, blanket, coffee bottle, hard-boiled eggs and the rifle up the ladder and into the loft. He settled himself quietly on the loose boards he'd laid over the crossbeams in front of the large, lowered fan opening. He stood the .308 against

continued

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REMINISCENCE *continued*

the wall and felt the five cartridges he had put in his shirt pocket that morning. With the blade of his pocketknife he worked apart several slats of the fan vent. The night poured into the store loft, and Aubrey looked out at the Mississippi hills bathed in November moonlight. A lone mosquito, one that winter had yet to kill, hummed in his ear. Aubrey wrapped himself in the wool blanket and waited, looking for a long time at the wide expanse of woods in front of him, the dance of moonlight on the surface of the stream. His eyes began to adjust to the night, and he was able to distinguish a raccoon's bright yellow eyes flashing from its den in the dead oak, the opalescent green of the bullfrogs by the stream bank, the silver leaves of the wild grape, the white throats of night honeysuckle. The plaintive song of a wood thrush kept him company. Aubrey knew that life along the river below him and in the woods and hills beyond was on the move, and that was as it should be.

They came first as sounds: a rustle of dead leaves on the forest floor, a sudden splash of river water, a dull whistle on the night wind. Aubrey drew closer to the hole he'd made in the fan vent. The deer had come. He knew it. The sounds became shadows on the river, running downstream with the swift water. Aubrey held his breath as the river shadows came to a halt at the woods' edge, not far from where his father had once kept a turnip patch. Many years later the turnips still came up, went to seed, came up again—food for the raccoons and rabbits, squirrels and deer, even for the gray fox when times were hard.

For years hunters had listened to Aubrey tell his stories of where the deer came at night, but he'd never told them exactly where, not even MacLaurin. The secret was his. This was his place, as good a place as any on earth for a man to be on a cold Thanksgiving morning. As he watched, the deer cautiously left the protection of the woods and moved into the clearing now ripe with turnips. At the sight of the deer, Aubrey's throat went dry and his heart raced like a child's, just as it always had ever since he'd first seen wild deer coming down Mount Harmon. What was it now, 60 years ago? Sixty-five? The feelings were the same, the best Aubrey had ever gotten from life.

The several small deer and does ate hungrily as Aubrey watched them with the obsessive attention of an artist paint-

ing a landscape, taking in every detail. The years had not diminished his awe of the grace and beauty of deer, their certainty of purpose, their speed and courage. Once as a boy he had seen a white-tailed deer at full gallop. He remembered thinking that the deer was the wind itself. He often thought afterward that the deer racing through Burton's meadow that day was the closest he'd come to seeing perfection, fundamental and unadorned.

It was nearly dawn before the big buck came to the turnip patch. A pink haze, almost a fog, had begun to work its way across the fading night sky. Aubrey knew the buck at first sight. They had met at the turnip patch three years ago and again last year. This was the deer that filled Aubrey's dreams. The buck, heavy with winter fat and crowned with a gnarled growth of antlers the likes of which Aubrey had never seen before, held back, a flash among the trees growing along the riverbank. Aubrey found him with the binoculars and gasped at his size, power, dignity. The buck's eyes were as black as a crow's wing and seemed to take in everything. Breath rolled in clouds from his nostrils. Suddenly he moved toward the delicious turnips. Aubrey reached for his .308 and slipped the barrel through the slit in the fan vent. He thought about how good the stock felt against his cheek. He took his time, putting his sight where he wanted it, holding it and then squeezing the rifle's well-worn trigger. *Click.*

The buck lifted his great head toward the store loft, then turned and dashed back into the woods. Aubrey watched as the buck splashed across the river. He smiled.

"There, that's deer 187," he said to himself.

He put the rifle across his lap, peeled and ate a hard-boiled egg, poured a cup of coffee and watched the morning break clear and cold. It was Thanksgiving Day, and Aubrey gave thanks indeed that he had this place where the wild deer came to feed, a place where he could watch and take part in their wildness and mystery.

He slipped three shells into the rifle, climbed down the ladder, unlocked the store's doors and got into his truck. He drove to the café where he was to meet MacLaurin. He could not wait to tell him of his night, especially of the big buck that was heading northeast across the river toward the Hammer bean field. **END**

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Edited by GAY FLOOD

THE LEGACY OF JOE DELANEY

Sir:

Having had the privilege of being a teammate of Joe Delaney's (Sometimes the Good Die Young, Nov. 7) at Northwestern State University, I have many fond memories of him and his ever-present smile and good humor. It did not surprise me that Delaney risked his own life to try to save three young boys from drowning, because he was always an unselfish person. His death was a tragic accident that deeply saddened many of us, but my memories of Joe are very dear and plentiful. Frank Deford's superb article brought tears to my eyes but also joy to my heart with the knowledge that Joe had touched the hearts of so many other people. There were two kinds of people in Delaney's life: those who loved him and those who had to defend against his awesome athletic ability on the football field.

PAT SPRUCE
Little Rock, Ark.

Sir:

Frank Deford's heartwarming story of Joe Delaney left me with mixed emotions. I didn't know whether to feel happiness that in this day and age someone who seemingly had everything to live for would risk his life to save the lives of others, or a pang of remorse—not because football lost one of its top-quality players, but because the world lost such a fine example of a man. Faced with Delaney's choice, not many of us, including myself, would have made the same courageous, unselfish decision.

CHRISTOPHER QUINLAN
Colchester, Conn.

Sir:

Thank you for Frank Deford's moving article on Joe Delaney. It's too bad so many of us failed to appreciate Delaney until he died. As Deford points out, there was much to admire him for. Unfortunately, this letter comes from someone who became a Joe D. fan only on June 29, 1983, the day this heroic man drowned trying to save the lives of three boys.

JOHN DORNEY
Scarsdale, N.Y.

Sir:

During the past year we've seen many "great" athletes prove themselves to be anything but great by their conduct off the field. Many examples of this kind of athlete can be cited, but very few athletes can be classified as truly great. Joe Delaney displayed exceptional athletic ability on the football field as the leading runner for the Kansas City Chiefs, and he exemplified the qualities of a true hero when he died last summer in an attempt to

save three drowning boys. In Delaney we saw what we like to see in a professional athlete: a caring man with exceptional talent who used that ability as best he could. I nominate him for Sportsman of the Year.

JAY WIEGMAN
Lawrence, Kans.

Sir:

Joe Delaney is unquestionably my candidate for Sportsman of the Year.

SONNY YOUNG
Durham, N.H.

Sir:

Is there a better writer in America than Frank Deford? Is there a guy a man would rather have a drink with? Or invite to his bachelor party? Or his sister's wedding?



KNITTED TRIBUTE
Sir:

Enclosed is a photograph (above) of my 34th-birthday present. I thought I would share with you the tribute my girl friend—she designed and knitted this "Dr. J sweater"—and me to Julius Erving, our all-time favorite basketball player. We took a little poetic license in adding to the design two other great players, Larry Bird and Magic Johnson. Unfortunately, we haven't seen enough of these players the past few years because we've been residing in the Netherlands.

JEFFREY P. SEONE
Amsterdam

Or buy a cigar for on the day his daughter is born?

I don't know Deford, and he may be a regular s.o.b., but if he ever dries up, or thinks life is too much, or has nothing left to say, I will hunt him down and make him pick up pen and paper again. Deford is a reason to read.

LLOYD GOLD
New York City

THE GAMECOCKS' VICTORY

Sir:

SI has been kind to name two members of the University of South Carolina football team as Players of the Week this year, but please don't take a victory away from the Gamecocks. There were 69,400 spectators in attendance at South Carolina's Williams-Brice Stadium on Oct. 29, and they will tell you that the score was 31-17 in favor of the Gamecocks, not North Carolina State as you reported (FOOTBALL'S WEEK, Nov. 7). All loyal Gamecock fans who read SI would very much appreciate a "We were wrong."

SUSAN MOORE
Columbia, S.C.

• We were wrong.—ED

BUGS BAER'S WORDS

Sir:

In response to reader Jerry Uher's letter (19TH HOLE, Nov. 7), I believe the observation, "He had larceny in his heart, but his feet were honest," correctly belongs to Arthur (Bugs) Baer, not Red Smith as Uher said.

BOB (BERNIE) BERNHARDT
St. Petersburg, Fla.

• It does. Baer said it of the New York Yankees' (1918-21) Ping Bodie after the 5' 8", 195-pound outfielder was thrown out while trying to steal second. The humorist's exact words, according to his son Arthur Bugs Baer of New York, who read them to us the way his father wrote them, were, "His head was full of larceny, but his feet were honest." In 1936 Damon Runyon quoted Baer as saying "I had used [the line] on 'Germany' Schaefer in Washington several years before I used it on Bodie, and it didn't seem to get much of a laugh. Its reception in New York made me realize that it makes a big difference where and when and how you say a thing—that it's a matter of what the stage people call timing." Incidentally, it was Bodie who said of his galvanizing Yankee teammate, "I room with Babe Ruth's suitcase"—ED

MINOR COMPLAINT

Sir:

Although *Bay City Blues* (TV/RADIO, Nov. 7) features some fine performances and

reveals a basic understanding of human failings and emotions, the program is far from complete in its portrayal of minor league baseball.

Unfortunately, the general public is pretty much unaware of how many hours of hard work go into running a successful franchise. Individuals such as the general manager, the assistant general manager, the clubhouse attendant and the groundskeeper are the backbone of all minor league operations, yet they have been invisible elements in the *Bay City* episodes that we have seen.

Who do you think goes out and sells those outfield-fence signs and all of the program advertisements? What minds do you suppose conjure up all those unique promotional ideas to attract fans to the park? Who is it that takes care of the equipment and the uniforms? And in what magical way does the field round itself into top shape?

Bay City Blues is certainly an entertaining program, but an accurate account of minor league baseball? Hardly.

BOB KITCHEN, General Manager
JON KAUFMAN, Assistant GM
SAM CLARK, Clubhouse Manager
DAVE NASTAPANY, Groundskeeper
Salem Redbirds
Salem, Va.

GETTING READY FOR SARAJEVO... Sir,

Hooray for Bob Ottum's delightful story and the wonderful photographs of Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean (*Just the Perfect Couple*, Nov. 7). Not only was it nice to see figure skaters profiled in such a lengthy article, but it was also good to see well-deserved attention focused on the sport of ice dancing. Torvill and Dean, as well as America's own Judy Blumberg and Michael Serber, have changed the face of ice dancing with their unique styles. They have made the sport better just by being in it.

DIANA COATE HUBBARD
Irvine, Calif.

...AND L.A. Sir,

Dan Levin's article on Rick McKinney and the sport of Olympic archery (*On Target for the Games*, Oct. 10) was most informative. However, for the readers who did not have their metric conversion tables handy, I'd like to point out that 90 meters, one of the distances over which an Olympic archer shoots, is about a yard and a half short of the length of a football field, and his arrows are aimed at an inner gold circle of about eight inches, which scores a 10. The outer gold scores a nine. It's hard enough to hit so small a spot at so great a distance.

Also, my compliments for choosing McKinney as an Olympic subject. In my eyes, he is the antithesis of the so-called elite athletes who are beginning to persuade amateur sports. McKinney simply works, trains, gets it all to-

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18TH HOLE *continued*

gether and then goes for the gold. Surely that's the way it should be.

HERB HUNT
Secretary

Watching Bowman of Union County
Linden, N.J.

YUGOSLAVIA

Sir:

Many thanks to William Oscar Johnson and Jerry Cooke for giving us a look at the host country for the 1984 Winter Olympic Games (A Trip East with West, Oct. 24). During the 1980 Olympics, when I found it agonizing to watch the proceedings from my distant vantage point in front of my television set, I promised myself that I would save my money for the trip to Sarajevo. But as February approaches, I find I will once again be restricted to my living room to view the scenery, color and festivities of the Games. Thus my sincere appreciation for your article. Johnson's revealing and intriguing description and Cooke's photographs of that land made it the best vacation I've had in a long time. If I can't be there for the 15 days in February, I feel very fortunate to have gone to Yugoslavia for 15 minutes in October.

THE REV. LET A. NEL JAHR
Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Mission, S. Dak.

CYLINDRICAL APPROACH

Sir:

A professor of mine used to say that journalism is one profession in which one needs no mathematics. I am a high school math teacher, and your item in *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED* (Nov. 7) concerning the NCAA rule specifying that a player fielding a punt be given at least a two-yard berth by would-be tacklers made me cringe. A two-yard square—or any size square—makes no sense whatsoever. However, if my students had answered, "A circle," for the correct interpretation of the rule, that would have been incorrect, too.

Because a player is three-dimensional, the area encompassing him by two yards on every side would have to be described as a cylinder surrounding his body with a radius of two yards from the level of the field to the top of his helmet.

To be precise, the cylinder would have the same contours as those of the player's body, so it would not be exactly circular. This cylinder would also be topped by a hemisphere with a radius of two yards.

Perhaps Dave Nelson of the NCAA rules committee should attend some of the classes that the athletes attend, to brush up on his geometry.

DANIEL B. HIRSCHBERG
Oak Park, Ill.

Letters should include the name, address and home telephone number of the writer and be addressed to The Editor, *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED*, Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, N.Y. 10020.

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